



ועידת התביעות
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Against Germany

Claims Conference Holocaust Survivor Memoir Collection

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FOREWORD

When the Nazis marched on Prague, Otto Edelstein, age 29, an officer in the Czech Army Reserves, like so many other Czech Reservists, waited to be called up. The call never came. No shot was fired. For in Munich at a conference with Der Fuhrer, Prime Ministers Chamberlain of Great Britain and Daladier of France, were promised “Peace in our time.” And on that day they gave democracy away.

The German troops entered Prague on March 15, 1939. The Czechs dared not try to fight the Third Reich alone. In despair and in anger Otto threw his gun into the Vltava River, which the Germans called the Moldau.

After that his sister, Frantiska, and his brother, Honza, were thrown out of medical school together with other Jews at the university.. Frantiska was entering her medical residency. Hanza and Pavel, the youngest brother, went to work digging ditches; no other job was open to them. Otto, the eldest, - a graduate textile engineer from the Brno Institute of Textile Technology, - went to work on a farm outside of Prague. Their father had died about 10 years previously. Any jobless Jewish male picked up on the street was shipped to a concentration camp, if he was not beaten up, tortured or killed first.

As the Nazis advanced, Czech Jews , like German and Austrian Jews before them, attempted to flee their county.. The borders of countries all over the world were closed to them, however. Some boats, overloaded with passengers, and refused entry, sank at sea. Many boats headed to the land of Israel, which was then called Palestine. For

Jews dreamed of returning to their historic homeland, which was at the time ruled by

Britain. The trip was treacherous. Many boats were barely seaworthy, and the stateless passengers suffered inhuman conditions, while the British turned away the boats. But Palestine represented a last, slim chance at life for desperate Czech Jews.

The Edelstein family had to make a difficult decision. Although the trip was treacherous, and they would likely be turned away when they got there, it was the only chance they had. Frantiska and their mother, Ida, stayed. The three brothers decided to leave.

This is the diary that Otto Edelstein kept from the day he decided to go. Dita Bor, who married Honza after the war, translated it from the Czech.

Rosalind Inslicht Edelstein

September 2nd 1940

The report that we are to depart came the day before yesterday on the 31st of August. It was a Saturday. I had spent that day with Dorine, my girl friend. And in the evening at about six o'clock, a special delivery registered letter came from the transport commandant telling us that we should go to the transport office on Sunday afternoon. Later on Saturday evening I went to my friend Shulhoff's apartment, where we talked a lot about our departure and the possibilities.

On Sunday I went down to the transport office. I was told there that we were to prepare for our departure. And of course at home there was panic. There were questions. Should we go?

"You don't have anything ready," my mother sighed. Despite the questions, we said categorically, "We are going."

That afternoon I was again at Shulhoff's, where our friends had gathered. Again the same talk, the same "baba maasos" (granny stories). Friends tried to dissuade us. "You'll get stuck in Bratislava. The Iron Gate on the Danube is closed. You cannot get through. The Danube Delta and the Dardanelles are mined. You will not get through."

But our friend, Mrs. Tauber, always a pragmatist, said it very well, "You have to use out the fare for which you paid. So you might as well go."

Anyway we decided we would all meet the next day at noon time at

Café Rahomen. No one, even those of us scheduled to depart, really believed that the transport would depart. But Franci came home in the evening from teaching in the Jewish school, and brought the report that it was probably true, that Storfer, one of the organizers of the transport, was in Prague.

At home they were making half hearted preparations for our departure, washing, cleaning, ironing, because all the time we still did not believe it.

Today, Monday morning, I rush to the transport office and learn it is quite definite that we will go. They tell me also that Storfer is in Prague!

In the transport office they tell us that the departure time will be Monday in the evening, or tomorrow, Tuesday morning. At 11 o'clock in the morning the transport office starts to issue the items we applied for; rucksacks, water bottles, and blankets. And then we slowly start to believe that it is true and that we will really go. At noontime I tell the news to Grete and to Dorine in the cafe where I meet them. We agree that I will meet them there again if the transport should depart the next morning. I make another date with my girl friend Dorine, and I tell her we will visit her under any circumstances.

Again we are running home and again to the transport office. We make the final purchases. Another pair of pants, and knives and shorts. It is quite lucky that we have ration cards. In the afternoon before we go shopping, I see a notice hanging on the board of the transport office. "Tonight at eight o'clock at the Masaryk Railway Station."

Actually at 5:30 we start to pack. We say goodbye to Uncle Hugo, who says to me as long as he will have anything I should not worry about my mother. My mother is holding up well. She is very courageous. I cannot look into her eyes because there is so much sadness and so much horror in them. I cannot look at them because it is worse than if she would be crying. Then little Annie, Paul's girl friend, comes to me, and asks me to take care of Paul.

At the last minute a letter comes from the transport office confirming that we should be at Masaryk Station at eight o'clock. At seven o'clock we say goodbye. Irma and Annie stay at home. And the last goodbye!

And then we rush away. Franci and Zdena (Hanza's girlfriend) come with us. The people in the apartment house, on the street, and in the trolley, look at us and they whisper. They know. As we get off the trolley, with a catch in his throat, the conductor looks at us intensely and says with great emotion, "See you again boys."

And with great conviction, "We will see you soon."

We are trying to be cheerful. We are forcing ourselves. Our throats tighten up. It is not easy.

In the railway station there already are many people lined up. We go to the end of the line. And Zdena and Franci come with us to the customs office. And there! The last goodbye with them! Franci gives me a grey woolen scarf and I look into her very special green eyes.

We are already opening the rucksack for the customs officer who

hardly looks at what is in them and just checks off the items in his index. I could have taken all the gold of the Republic!

. We line up again on the railroad platform. We meet George Weigut's sister. I don't know how she got here on the platform, because she is not going. Suddenly I discover that I have brought with me the papers for shipment of the so called "fracht goods," our property which is supposed to be shipped as freight. I give these papers to her, and she promises to take them to my mother. After she leaves we sit waiting on the platform for about two hours. Paul goes to the concession and buys some brandy and at about 11 o'clock at night they line us up again.

They read off our names, check them off, and let us go into a train that is leaving for Vienna. Our railroad cars are reserved. We discover there are two transports leaving, the Litzvovivar Transport and our transport. The Litzvovivar Transport is named after the street where the transport office is located, and it is organized by a private company . We, however, are in the transport organized by the Zionist Revisionist Party, in conjunction with the Jewish Community. Some of the railroad cars are already taken up by the people from the Litzvovivar Transport.

We sit in the car with Weigut, and then with an elderly lady and two girls. Later on we find out that the lady is Mrs. Gurtenburger with her daughter Fanny, and her girl friend Minka. And then two men, one is Mr. Pater and the second is Martin Winkler. We are beginning to talk. At about 11:45 the train starts. We open the windows of the train. We call out greetings with feigned

gaiety, "see you again."

3/9/40

The trip goes very well. We are getting acquainted with the environment. In the morning we arrive in Brno. Then in Breslav. Later in the morning, at 10:30, we arrive at the Viennese East Railroad Station Austbahnhof. The train continues from there and we go directly to Handel Ski Reichsprichi which is the railway station for the commercial pier (Imperial Bridge). We are getting out. We line up. I am helping unload cases from the transport with the common equipment. I get in line again and we slowly go through another customs house, then to the pier and to the steamboat.

Upon entering the boat we have to give up our luggage and they are sending us to find some space on the boat. We stay together with the Guttenbergs and choose a place in the bow of the lower deck. At the boat entrance which is closed, we have a little niche where we can sit. Meanwhile we go to look for our luggage in the rear, and we are taking out of them the items we will need for our trip, because we are told that the luggage will be stolen. We select a very good place to sit. And with us are several people from the Litzovivar Transport who were here since early morning. There is a young man whose name is Hans Frimuth and a couple. The husband's name is Ernst Winternitz. He is an electrical engineer. They are very nice people. We are looking around and getting acquainted with the boat. And we find out that a transport from Brno arrived about 24 hours earlier. These people took almost half of the boat for themselves and don't want to let us into any part

of what they had carved out for themselves.

The name of the steamboat is *Melk* and it belongs to DDS -Danube Domshiff Fart Gezelschaft.

The ferryboat of course is full. It was built for Sunday afternoon excursions on the Danube to hold only 200 people. There are over 700 people on the boat now. Mr. Storfer, our "wonderful" transport organizer, comes to see us on the boat. Perhaps he wants to see if we are comfortable. Of course we sleep on the floor, on the deck, one beside each other, like dominoes. But we sleep well because the night before we did not sleep at all.

4/9/40

I have been up since six o'clock in the morning. Everyone is up. Now we are departing. The boat slowly gets off the mooring at the shore, floats a little backwards, then turns around into the stream, and picks up speed. It already appears that the Viennese countryside and the suburbs are running along side us. After a little bit of general excitement everyone sits down and the trip is fairly pleasant. After a little stop, first at Bratislava, then at Petizolka, about one o'clock in the afternoon, we bid the last goodbye to the last SS men. We are leaving the Reich!

We are going into Hungary through Genoa. We see Komarno which used to belong to Czechoslovakia before the Hungarians got it from the Germans. And in the evening we see Vishengrad. At about 11:00 o'clock at night we arrive at Budapest, where we stop, just in front of the Hotel

Hungaria, to pick up food. The day passes very well except for the evening. When we arrive in Budapest the crew chase us away from the gate where we had made our quarters.

They have to open up the gate for loading from the side that we are on so we climb to the upper deck. There we look for some place in the bow but some other people do not like this. It is too crowded and because we are told that the places we occupied last night for sleeping were not permanent places, we settle down in the hole near the wall of the boiler room. It is very warm and we start to make our beds there. Pavil and I go to fetch our things, and Hanza stays to watch so that no one takes our places. When we return, I see that Hanza is arguing with a tall, young man with glasses. They are pushing each other, and after some pushing, Hanza breathes into his glasses and the first squabble starts. I fly into it. I push the man away. I hit him from one side and Pavel gives it to him from the other side. And there is our first fight.

The mob of the Brno Transport pushes us toward the wall, and suddenly there in front of me stands a very good looking white haired saladon, Mr. Arnold Braun, commander of the Brno Transport. And he is promising us horrible consequences. We will have to go into the ship's jail and he will call the ship's captain and the police. Then along comes the doctor who examines the man, Eric Rothschild. And he tells us that we kicked him in the balls and that he is in shock. I am answering him that no one kicked him. And he screams at me, "Herr ich bein ein Artz." (Sir, I am a

doctor). And again there is a new argument.

It only ends when Kornfeld, commander of our transport, appears. We have to promise him that we will abide by his judgment and punishment as soon as we are on the sea worthy vessel where he will have jurisdiction. Then we go to Rothschild to tell him that we are sorry and we return to the upper deck where everyone is kidding us.

The whole argument started because Eric Rothschild, whom we get to know and whom we get to like, and who gets to like us too, very much, had claimed the place that we wanted to take, for himself and his wife. They had stayed in the place the night before near the Brno Transport. And of course the general uproar, and depressing mood contributed to the incident. When we finally do get out on the sea, no one refers to the incident and it is long forgotten. But for ever after our reputation remains as the fighting brothers. Now and forever they call us "the gangsters."

5/9/40

At ten o'clock this morning we come to Mohatch where we see another boat carrying part of our transport which will join us on the seagoing vessel. The Iron Gate is a section of the Danube full of cataracts. They built a canal on the right side of the Danube so the boats could slip through under their own power downstream. Upstream they have big locomotives to pull the boats up because the currents are very strong.

Today the whole area is a lake. They built a large dam there. I think

the Island of At Calais ,which was so picturesque is now submerged.

7/9/40

We have the Bulgarian shore on the right of us. On the left side, the Rumanian shore, facing downstream. At 8:15 in the morning, we arrive at a town called Ruschuk.

All the boats belonging to Storfer's Transport are here. That means us, the *Schonbrunn*, the *Heliss*, and the *Uranus*.

In the middle of the Danube River, on neutral territory between Rumania and Bulgaria, a boat is anchored which is called the *Pentscho*. It is a side-wheeler, a steamboat. There are 300-500 Revisionist boys on it from Slovakia, and they are standing here for three months. And no one wants to take any responsibility for them. Neither the Romanians nor the Bulgarians want to keep them, and also they do not want to let them go. The steamboat is their property. The boys are calling to us desperately, "Wirhaben hungar - (We are hungry)."

The Pentscho is required to fly a yellow flag signifying there is a plague on board ship. But the passengers were never really examined by either the Bulgarian or Romanian medical authorities. The Jewish community in Romania wanted to feed them. And so they deposited food at the Romanian official headquarters so they would carry the food to the *Pentscho*, since no one is allowed to have any contact with the boat. However, the Romanians in charge simply divided the food amongst themselves and never gave them

anything. They, the passengers, are in horrible shape. And all night long the wind carries their cries for help. "Wir haben hungar."

This evening I have fever, and I go to the doctor who puts me in a cabin. The berth is occupied by Arthur Gerstman. Arthur is from our transport and has heart trouble. And so I am lying on the floor.

8/9/40

In the morning I am worse. My fever has increased and I get a berth in another cabin.

9/9/40

I am now able to get up during the day. And in the evening I have to vacate the berth for another sick person. I am sent to sleep below, on the floor in the women's cabins.

I learn later today that when I was sick, there was quite a bit of commotion on board regarding the *Pentscho*. Our people and the people from the other transports got together by putting a long plank from one boat to another. Since we were closest to the *Pentscho* we had learned that there were five hundred Slovakian Jews on the boat without food or drinking water. And we informed the transport leaders of the *Schonbrun*, the *Helios*, and the *Uranus*. The leaders of each of the transports decided they would collect from their own meager food and water supplies, and sneak it over on a small boat to the people on the *Pentscho*. When they were collecting the food to

put it on the boat, one of the men who was carrying the box was caught. The Romanians wanted to take him to jail since the boat was off limits and it was illegal to approach it. However, our captain, the captain of the *Melk*, intervened. And finally after much talking and even more bribery of the Romanian police captain, the man was released. I think it was Eric Rothschild, the man from the Brno transport with whom we had had a fight about sleeping quarters that first evening.

Today we are overtaken by four German or Viennese Danube boats: *Jupiter*, *Saturn*, *Linz*, and another one whose name I don't know; and four Hungarian boats. They are going to Romania to pick up the Germans from Dobrudze for repatriation. All of them are empty. All of our four boats, for which we paid much more than the round trip fares, will also be used to transport the same people. It is a very good business for the German bastards. We paid for the trip and the sons of bitches from Dobridze will be repatriated for our money.

We are loading coal today. From Ruschik we steam over to the other side of the river, to the Romanian port of Giurgiu, where we stop for about two hours. We send a motorboat with food to the *Pentscho*. We think we will succeed this time in getting through to the *Pentscho*.

10/9//40

In the afternoon we arrive at Braila. For the first time in my life I see a close-up of sea going vessels! I always loved the sea and dreamed of going

to sea, and for me it is a great sight! I am exhilarated and I day dream about Herman Melville and "Moby Dick."

We are going through!!

In the afternoon we reach Galate, which is a larger port on the Danube. We are welcomed here by a motor boat with the "hakenkreuzen" (swastika) and with SS men in it. Actually they were checking at all areas of the Danube that we passed through. But this is the first time they are flying the SS flag, the "hakenkreuze," without any hindrance. Of course we are "overjoyed" to see the "hakenkreuze" again.

We had already "missed it."

Behind the Galate the coast is occupied by Romanian soldiers. We come to the junction of the Pruth River which empties into the Danube and the railway bridge over the Danube is down. It has been destroyed by explosives. The Pruth River 3S is actually a new border between Soviet Russia and Romania. The Russians had evidently bombed the bridge. We see Russian cavalry and the Cossacks on the shore. And the houses fly red flags with the Soviet Star. For a little while my brothers and I flirt with the possibility of jumping into the water and swimming ashore. But we realize that the Russians would probably shoot at us. And then we see Russian monitors and gun boats. At night we anchor in the middle of the river.

11/9/40

We continue at 6:00 a.m. We are now in the Delta of the Danube and

the northern channel called Kilia, divides and goes up north. At about 10:00 o'clock in the morning we arrive in Tulcea. The first thing we see are three old steamboats. We can read the name on two of them. One of them is *Pacific*. The other one is *Atlantic*. Looking at the condition of these boats I would say that these names are a bit boastful. Even a layman, a landlubber like myself, can see that these are ancient wrecks. And these are our boats. Our sea-going vessels!

Over in Braila I had a discussion with a man from the Litzovivar Transport, Mr. Fisher. We were looking at the "beautiful" boats standing there and Mr. Fisher says that these boats would probably be too small for our transport. (Today I know these would be sizeable boats - ten, twelve thousand tons.) At that time I told Mr. Fisher that I would be awfully glad if we could get on a boat like one of them, but I was afraid that we will have to get on a boat that is much worse. Now when I meet Mr. Fisher I point out the wrecks to him and I tell him I was right.

We are anchoring near the left shore of the Danube. Our concession is already empty. We cannot buy anything except cigarettes. The concession was altogether quite a rip-off. During the whole trip they were ripping us off. Everything was one mark, a half glass of beer, half a liter of beer. And a quarter pound of butter was one mark. We had 750 Crowns, that is, 75 marks of "bordschein", which are coupons which we bought at the transport office in Prague for currency on the boat. And we had some left, so we buy Bulgarian cigarettes, "Orel," quite a good cigarette.

We are looking at a fisherman's hut on the shore, a very poor structure made from twigs and mud. In Czechoslovakia even the poorest person would not live in it. The old man from the hut sits the biggest part of the day in the boat with his grandchildren, trying to catch some fish. He is not very successful. He is being assisted by a Romanian policeman who stands on shore watching our boat to see that none of us will jump into the water and get into Rumania. The Romanian policeman looks like a porter from a whore house. He has a brown uniform full of decorations, and if you would meet him on the street you would think he was some kind of general, not a policeman. There is quite a bit of traffic here, going in both directions of the river.

There are a lot of country people dressed like Russians with fur hats on boats that resemble canoes, three, four people to a boat, and mostly loaded with dry firewood.

12/9/40

We are visited by Mr. Goldner, a relative of Mr. Storfer. He comes aboard and we are negotiating about the transfer to the so-called "sea-going vessels."

13/9/40

The man who ran our concession goes in the afternoon to the *Helios*. When he returns he brings back 50 kilo of honey, some wine, and I think,

some money, which he donates to the transport, saying, "weil ich euch halt so geirrt hab," meaning, "when I ripped you off like this." Even he, has a bad conscience, about how we are cheated and tricked at every turn.

The food is always worse and worse. During the trip it looks about like this: mornings we have linden tea, in the evening a little marmalade. For lunch we eat a little casserole (eintopf, as they call it), it is mostly peas, rice and things like that. And in the evening a little piece of cheese or salami. Of course we get bread with it but the portions are very small..

We have a little celebration tonight. We gather around the funnel and celebrate Masaryk's birthday. Emil Green is the master of ceremonies. He pretends he is the purser of the *Melk*, falls in love with the leader of Brno Transport, Eric Braun, and he confesses that he is an agent of the Gestapo. As a souvenir to Braun he gives a couple of Hitler's printed speeches, which he carries with him as propaganda material. I don't think he sounds like much of an agent, just a side- kick.

14/9/40

We are supposed to transfer with the *Uranus* passengers to the *Pacific*. The boats are anchored at the center of the river and we are anchored together. The captain in command of the *Melk* is a very decent person. He used to be a Yugoslavian marine officer and during the whole trip he behaves very decently. For instance he gives us the blankets that were on the boat for the Germans from Dobzudze and he has compassion for us. He does not want to be considered to be any part of the "whole thing." So

he goes aboard the *Pacific* and looks over the whole boat and returns and says, "as far as I am considered, I would never take command of the boat, because it is a big coffin."

We start to discuss the situation with Mr. Goldner and the discussion gets nowhere. Eric Braun, whom we voted to be the commander of the whole transport, (that means Brno, Prague, everyone who was on the *Melk*) decides, and says he will not give an order to transfer. Finally, we come to an agreement that *Melk* passengers will transfer to the first boat which was actually moored near the shore. It was named, *Canisbay*. Storfer wants to save the boat for the next transport.

About 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon we are starting the transfer and I actually get aboard the *Canisbay* at night. With horror I see what it looks like. The living quarters are bunkers for freight goods divided into two layers. The beds are two or three above each other. There are altogether about 600-700 people. Dirty mattresses are not on all the beds. There is a lot of junk and garbage in the gangways. The boat is decorated with different additions and structures on the decks, such as hospitals, toilets, and so on. I am thinking of Traven's "Yorika." And I tell my brothers that I am not going to sleep in the bunkers below because in case of panic no one would get out of there. They all have kerosene lamps over there. On the *Melk* we had been using kerosene lamps only when we were standing in port because the engines were not running. But when we were sailing we used electric lights.

I finally lie down at the rear of the boat on the top deck. The boys are on the lower deck below me. I can see them there. Actually I am lying on a structure above the deck. I cannot fall asleep. People are stumbling over me and looking for a place to lie down. The mood, or as we call it in Czech, the “psychosis” on the-boat is dreadful.

15/9/40

At about 1:30 in the morning I hear in my sleep someone shouting to vacate the boat in order. I get up. I meet my brothers and we are leaving the boat very slowly over a bridge which connects us with the Danube shore. No one knows what actually happened. Finally we find out that the night watch of the boat woke up Kasi Laufer and he told him that the boat is taking on water. On the shore we are watched and guarded by soldiers and by police. Of course we are very cold. We are shivering and our teeth are chattering. We sit here on the railway tracks. Luckily we took our blankets with us. But we left everything else on board.

In the morning tea is being prepared. And my brother, Hanza, goes back on board to get our possessions. We look around. We are on a dusty pier which is about 50 meters deep. Behind us are railroad tracks, and behind the railroad tracks are some warehouses. We are not allowed to go there. We are all very depressed. And everyone swears that he will not go back to the boat. The Romanians who are watching us are beginning to trade with some of our people, cigarette lighters, watches, fountain pens all these are articles that are desirable here. They pay for it with fatback, cognac,

salami, etc;

My brothers and I do not trade. We have decided to stick it out and try to keep the little that we have. In the afternoon there is a request from one of the Rumanian police officers. He asks Fantl to get him a girl for the evening. And so we are getting acquainted with the Rumanians! Of course he does not get him a girl.

The mood can be described with three words, dust, stones and despair. In the afternoon we bring our bags ashore from the boat. We take a dip in the Danube, which puts us in a little better mood and gives us some vigor. In the afternoon, towards evening, we have a visit from Mr. Goldner, and after his visit, Braun tells us that the Rumanians are allowing us to move into an old sawmill, which is about 300 meters from the river, and we are permitted to set up camp there. Whoever wants to, may go there. We go there with the others but many people return to the boat.. We go to the camp with the Winternitzes and with the Freymouths, and with the people we had joined on the transport. There we cook tea on a primus, and we eat a Pischinger cake that Freymouth carried with him from his house. We sleep outside before the Somel Building, and for the first time since we left, we sleep well.

16/9/40

People are erecting tents from blankets. The sun is very, very hot here; And some of the people are returning to the boat. We return to the boat looking for room under the roof but everything is occupied. We finally decide

to stay on shore, the same place where we slept the night before. There is a report that the boat will go for repairs to Surina. That persuades me to return to the boat with the Winternitzes, so we could make the trip. I find a berth in the forecastle cabin. The entrance is directly to the main deck. Originally it was some kind of cabin for passengers. There are eighteen berthed here around the walls, but now they built some construction in the center of the cabin, and there are sixty people here now. We three sleep near the door on the bottom layer of the structure. We have one berth together. The three of us sleep side by side and we are afraid they will evict us because the cabin was originally intended for women and children. Freymouth went to sleep on the bunk below and Winternitz and his wife went into the gangway near the machine room.

17-24/9/40

I became a commander, as they call it, a "zimmer commandant," of the quarters where we sleep. It is number five now. I felt very claustrophobic in the beginning on the boat. There are 500 persons here. Two hundred are in the camp. But now I am used to it and it is okay. The kitchen is on the shore in front of the boat. And there we line up for food. Food of course is not much, not only because Storfer and his cohorts don't give us enough, but the quality of the groceries is poor and the cooks are also very bad. In the morning they cook tea. For lunch some soup with the Revisionist salty can, which came from Prague. And in the evening we usually have a little piece of cheese or salami or soup, and again tea and bread. I read a little but I am

not learning anything. Being commander of the quarters takes quite a lot of time. I have to arbitrate the steady arguments between the Waldmans and the Bycks, and between the Esterlevys. And these are not small things.

Mrs. Byck has a little boy named "Layish", and he is the most beautiful, precocious little boy I have ever seen. Everyone loves him. He is five years old. I already made his acquaintance in Vienna. He comes to me every day and I must cut out for him a cardboard star with an inscription, "Layish Byck, Chief of Police." The child knows everyone and everyone likes him. He wanders around by himself and you find him everywhere. Other children in the room where I am commandant, are also cute and smart, but none of them is Layish.

Rojick Halevi is also here; she was Franci's pupil. Franci actually has four pupils here; Paul Iltes, Rojika, Yetta Yarman, and Alita Freedman.

Alita Freedman's sister, Irene, went insane since we moved to this boat. She is locked in one cabin and they have to watch her because she once took off her clothes, threw them out of the window into the water, and she wanted to jump out after them. During the day she is quiet but at night she makes a lot of noise.

In the neighboring room, number 12A, in the bunker, twelve boys from Czechoslovakia formed what they call, "Black Cougar."

We are awaiting the arrival of a fourth boat, which is allegedly coming from Greece. The name of the boat is Rosita. The boat is expected every

day, but never arrives, and each day Goldner says, "I have a wire that *Rosita* left Piraeus," or, "I have a wire that *Rosita* left Istanbul," and so on. And since this boat is supposed to take on all the remaining people from our transport, and is supposed to sail with us to Palestine, we are of course awaiting the boat eagerly.

"Black Cougar" opened a bookmaking bureau. People are asking bets on when the *Rosita* arrives. And they are betting cigarettes.

Ernst Braun sent his passport to Prague to get foreign currencies. Of course he never gets it. We correspond with Storfer. We tell him that his boat is not "Shtafest," means standing straight or firm. Goldner is by now angry with us. He does not even come in person to negotiate, but he sends his sidekick, Weinstock.

On the 19th of September we merge officially. The three transports: (Revisionists, Mandler-Latzovivar, and Brno) become one transport, under the leadership of Ernst Braun. Actually Ernst Braun is the only decent person running the outfit. His vice commander is Kronberger, and the treasurer is Dr. Fantl

Dr. Rosenblatt is consultant in law. And Platachik is commander of the Revisionist police, and he is also a general inspector.

20/9/40

They paint the flag of Panama on the sides of the boat and the boat is

renamed, the *Milos*. This is its third name. It was originally named *Maria*, then *Cannisbay*, and now it is named the *Milos*. We understand that Storfer was in Tulceya. He improved our food. Dr. Fantl, actually his name is Henry Fantl, expresses it correctly when he says, "This big gangster is not as small as the small gangsters."

24/9/40

There is a little scandal. Actually it takes place in the camp. A Romanian soldier bought a watch from someone in the camp. And the Romanians found out about it and they are investigating it. Arpad Braunstein takes responsibility for it, (although he did not do it), and as punishment he is transferred from the camp to the boat. The boat is like some kind of Siberia.

The Romanians are building some fortifications along the Danube River near the camp. Evidently against Russia. Well, they would have that Chuzpah. They are using this as a pretext to abolish the camp. Of course Storfer probably instigated it. They chase all the people from the camp to the boat, where of course there is a great commotion and almost a revolution. Braun talks to us and admonishes us sternly, but finishes his speech with "Lov." I want to explain what "lov" means. Actually it is the Hebrew word, "Lo," meaning "no." We used it in Czechoslovakia as a negation of something that was previously said. Sometimes if we did not mean it we would praise a person to his face, and then we might say "lov." That means that "everything I said before is just the contrary." So he is using "lov" to tell us

that he did not mean the hard words he had previously said.

Despite his speech we do not want people to go on the boat and there is an uproar. The Romanians have arrested Platchick and Berkowitch. In the afternoon they release them but now we are all on one boat, literally. I put up another twenty people in my room. Now I have eighty people in my room ! And it sure is full. It is so full it could explode! The boat is overfilled too. No one can really move. We also have a visit from a Mr. Afgorinos. Another one from the Mafia. He is owner of the *Atlantic Pacific*, and he is the manager of the *Milos*. The *Milos* is owned by Storfer. He proposes that the boat, *Rosita*, that we are expecting, take on all our luggage from all three transports and take it to Palestine. He proposes this because he says, "The crew have visas for Palestine, and the boat can legally land." And we certainly do not agree to this. The honorable partner of Messieurs Storfer and Goldner, is a little naive. They know we will have to follow if they go off with our luggage.

26-31/9/40

We are getting newspapers occasionally. We are getting them from a young sailor. Actually he is a Spanish doctor who serves as a sailor on the Atlantic.

The water for drinking and cooking is being brought on the boat from Tulce. In the beginning we were going to pick it up with pots ourselves, but the Romanians are bringing it to us now. We are actually lucky that the

Romanians allow us to have a kitchen on the shore, because otherwise we could not move on the boat. Especially interesting in the room that I am commanding, is when the women are arguing and screaming and the children are yelling and running around. We stumble over each other and during the meals there is always something spilled. Well, it is very merry.

In the morning we go to swim in the Danube River before the Inspector comes. A policeman with the face of a chimpanzee and the uniform of a cheap hotel porter permits us to go, but collects one cigarette from each of us for the favor. Romanians are terrific altogether. They give us an ultimatum to depart, and are ripping us off all the way, and, allegedly, Storfer, too, as much as the traffic can bear. When we transfer from the *Melk* to the *Milos*, one of the officers wants to be paid for the presentation of the passport. But he compromises with a few cigarettes instead. He wanted 300 lire for the transfer but he gets nothing. But he tried.

28/9/40

Braun visits Storfer in the hotel. Storfer tells him that *Rosita* will arrive in the middle of the night between the 29th and the 30th and the *Milos* will carry only 300 people. All the other people - the old and the sick - will be transferred to the *Rosita*. We will sail with the agreement of the Italian government, which supposedly will support our transport.

Today they try out a life saving boat. There are four of them and about five rafts. As soon as they let the boat down it sinks immediately. Now they

pull it ashore and a ship's carpenter from Tulce comes to fix it up.

29/9/40

Storfer comes to the shore of the boat and calls out, "We will sail in four days."

30/9/40

Storfer boards the boat. We agree amongst ourselves that we will not call him any names, and we all behave very well. Actually, he should be hung from the roast.

31/9/40

We are very lucky that the weather is so nice. It has rained only twice. And when it rains it is dreadful on the boat. We cannot go out on the quarter deck and it is very bad. The sanitation is tolerable even though the circumstances in the hospital are lousy. Dr. Saxl from Brno transport is the primary chief doctor. The chief nurse, also from the Brno transport, is Spiller, and she manipulates him the way she wants to. She is a heavy, fat woman in her middle forties. She is a very aggressive, nauseating person. I get along pretty well with her. Her favorites get a special diet. They call it "tsubusa" (additional food). They issue about 200 tickets for "tsubusa".

With the food it is altogether funny. The food supplies are in a little warehouse and two guys are in charge. One of them is Israel, and the second one is Meyerowitz. Everyone is cursing them. Of course to be in charge of a food warehouse on a boat like this, necessarily means that people would

be against you. But Israel and Meyerowitz are quite a couple. Most of the people on our transport come from the Carpathian Ukraine. So the tradition to blame Eastern Jews for all kinds of mischief, adds to the fact that they are two scoundrels. The cooks are also stealing from us and ripping us off publicly, and they cannot cook.

1/10/40

Finally, in the morning at about 9 o'clock, the *Rosita* arrives. The *Rosita* is a steamboat about as big as the *Milos*, that means, about 700 tons. Perhaps a little smaller. Storfer is here on the boat again. He tells us that the *Rosita* brought us and the crew, food supplies, mattresses and safety belts. The safety belts are good, but some are missing and there are not enough to go around.

Storfer wants all of us to go on this boat to Palestine. That means, more than 700 people. And he appeals to our "Jewish conscience." Very funny!

2/10//40

The provisions, the mattresses and safety belts, are being transported today from the *Rosita* to our boat. Tonight is "Erev Rosh Hashanah." The Orthodox have services in the rear of the boat and Rabbi Gelb is officiating. In the stern other people are holding services and they are led by Cantor Lehman, and Dr. Bkan will give the sermon. During the services someone from the shore calls and tells us that the United States has entered the war. Most of us believe this, but on the third of October in the morning, we find out

that this was a "bonke" (untrue). We are very very sad when we learn the truth.

Today for the first time, some sailors arrive. They do not look very trustworthy. We are also getting frequent visits from the ships' commission of the port. They are supposed to decide whether the boat is capable of sailing. They decide to add some sand because the boat is too light. We do not have enough ballast. Of course we are certain that they will certify the boat. If worst comes to worst, it will cost Storfer some few hundred lei to bribe them or whatever the Romanians have as currency. Also two guys come aboard. One claims to be the captain, and the other, to be the first mate of our boat. They also don't look very trustworthy.

4/10/40

Storfer is here. He claims the Romanians are pressing him for immediate departure. Of course we will all go on the *Milos*. We are now at peace with the idea. We just want to get away from here. Storfer played it with us ten to zero. He first let us go into the camp, then transferred us to the boat; then the fairy tale with *Rosita*. Then he let us stand and cool off. He saw that all of us would not leave on the *Milos* and if he had pressured us he would have revolutions and difficulties. But he let us get used to it. We do not feel so pressed and claustrophobic as we did. We just want away from here under any circumstances. It's like the Story of the Rabbi and the family with the goats and cow. Well, you have to take your hat off to him. He

is not a small gangster.

5/10/40

The Romanians do not want to give us fresh water. So we have to cook tea from the Danube River. We do not have bread, so we eat Navy biscuits. These biscuits are black and moldy.

6/10/40

We are crowded to the breaking point. I am forced to empty a room where fifteen people were sleeping (eleven men and four women) because the crew want it for themselves. Everybody can exploit us and do anything and everything they want to us, even the crew of such a boat. I am reminded of the Spanish Navy in 1492 who delivered Jews to the Inquisition when they were trying to escape from Spain.

We are told that tomorrow we will leave for sure.

Yesterday a special court was set up. Many situations have gotten out of control and the court was set up to try such situations that we can no longer control by ourselves. After one week on the ferryboat, some man, probably an American, and probably our next navigator, set up shop on the boat. He had been selling the stuff only for western exchange, wrist watches, clothing, pencils, etc; His prices are exorbitant and unbelievable. I am furious that no one is able to stop him. We are 700 and we are afraid of one vicious (limp) man. This is the usual Jewish servility.

The court will be judging Placzika, who stole portions of meat. They

will then judge Porges, who ran up to the top deck with a hunk of meat and threw it into the water in a desperate gesture. He is right because all the food, including the cheese is green and moldy and stinks. Today they cooked a dish of bad salami and everybody threw it into the water. Whoever ate it was very sick and had terrible stomach pains.

7/10/40

The wooden gangplank is taken away. We are prepared to go. At the latest we will depart at 12 o'clock. I give Braun a letter for home. I have written 20 letters home. and I have received only one answer. Mr. Winternitz is not going with us and watches us leave. He thinks the boat is in terrible shape and will sink before we get there.

We will depart at 3:14. Storfer watches the boat leave from the shore. He waves proudly to us as if he is giving himself credit for a job well done. He looks like he thinks he is responsible for the singing and laughing as we depart. He struts like a peacock. What an evil man he is!

As we sail away everybody sings Hatikva with great intensity and feeling. The boat sails down the river for an hour and we are passing the *Atlantic*. The *Atlantic* is damaged.

We must stay in the river for the night instead of anchoring in Suline. If we anchored in Suline we would have to pay a heavy fee. A Romanian policeman on the boat is trying to check each passenger for guns and other things. Ernest Braun takes him aside and finally convinces him that it is too crowded to be checking suitcases because everyone is sandwiched in and

there is no room to open and spread out suitcases. In the end the policeman gives up the idea, but only after Ernst Braun buys his (the Rumanian policeman's) gun for 1,000 Czech Crowns.

What in the world will he do with Czech crowns? God only knows!

8/10/40

At 10 o'clock in the morning the boat sails. At about 2:30 we come to Sulina. Sulina looks very pretty. There are many ships and boats anchored there. We continue two more kilometers from Sulina. We can see the open sea at last! It was always my dream to travel on the sea ever since I can remember.

The water is surging and I pinch myself to be sure I am not dreaming! The sea at last! My dream comes true. The Romanian policeman gets off the boat and I give him another letter to mail home. The color of the water is changing. It is cleaner and it is now dark blue. People are getting seasick but my brothers and I feel good. I walk on deck. I look into the water. We are sailing swiftly

But I still do not believe that I am on the sea. We go to sleep very late because the sea is very beautiful in the night.

9/10/40

The boat continues to sail East. We can see Caligro, Varun and the sea is rocking the boat from side to side.

10/10/40

Early in the morning we spy the Bosphorus. Both the European and

the Asian sides are foggy, but many castles stand out in the fog on both sides. We must stop for fifty minutes. Then we continue. The sun comes out and everything is breathtakingly beautiful. The view is the most beautiful I have ever seen in my life. There are pine trees, cypress trees, castles, white towns and spas.

We arrive at Istanbul. We stop. A captain comes on the boat. He brings bad news. We will not be permitted to stop there. We were supposed to stop for food and we were expecting to get letters from home. When we wrote the last letters home, we had written the return address as Istanbul. This is devastating. Some police boats are coming close and are chasing us away. I have a knot in my stomach. From far I see many places I wanted to visit; Zlatyrak, Perin, Sliatin, Vikidar...On the East side I see Hazin, Sofia, Blue Toviv. We are entering the Marmaree Sea! We are passing a Turkish ship with soldiers. They are all we see. No one else is in sight!

11/10/40

At 5 o'clock we cross the Dardanelles!.. We discover that Storfer cheated us! Before we left on October 3rd, Braun asked Storfer for money for food and water and coal and other things we would need along the way. At that time Storfer assured him that the captain had the money for these things. When we got on the boat Braun asked the captain whether he has money for the expenses, and the captain said, "Yes, I do". When we were in Tulce, another captain came on the boat and said, "Storfer told me that Braun

has the money." So we are in Sulina and we have no money whatever.

We can get water here but we must pay for it. People from Si & Ri are sending a wire to the Afgorinos office to find Storfer. It is the telephone number that Storfer gave Braun in the event of an emergency. But they answer, "We never heard of this man, Storfer".

We are sending wires to Athens and to Salonika.

Tomorrow is Yom Kippur and we will all be fasting, children and old people too, not out of choice but out of necessity.

13/10/40

There are a number of weddings on the boat. It is very easy to get married on the boat. But it will be very difficult to get divorced later. Paul Lustig, Stein, Hitachman, and Harry Stein and others.

The captain marries them officially. And the religious ceremonies (where the Rabbi marries them) will take place tomorrow. As a wedding dinner the married couples receive a can of ham and a cup of wine.

14/10/40

We are going to Piren instead of Mytilene. At 7:00 o'clock in the morning the sea is turbulent. It is getting worse and worse. And many people are seasick. The boats stinks as many people are vomiting all over the place. Hanza and I are sick too.

15/10/40

In the morning at 4:00 o'clock the sea quiets down and we continue to Piren and Athens. I am trying to look for the Acropolis which should be seen from the sea. A ship full of soldiers approach us and the soldiers chase us away and do not permit us to stop.

For dinner, for the second time we have only potatoes. They can be cooked with salt water in their shells. We do not have any drinking water at all. We are thirsty and starving and my stomach hurts.

At about one o'clock in the afternoon we stop in Lavrion. The mayor of Lavrion sends a wire to Athens to the Jewish community asking for help. At about 4:30 representatives of the Joint Distribution Committee for Refugees come to the boat and promise to get for us what we need. They are called the Joint Comite de Secours aux Refugees. The people from the Joint are looking over the boat, playing with the children. They are very touched by the children, especially our Layesh, who is so captivating.

16/10/40

I love Lavrion. It is such a wonderful town. It is a town that smiles in the sunshine. We get food. We do not have coal. In this place they only have brown coal and we cannot use it for the boat, We must have black coal. The captain tells us that we will not go until we have coal.

17/10/40

We learn from the newspapers that the Germans have entered Rumania. We are glad we left at the right time. We left only two days ago.

17/10/40

Today we get our food 30 dkg.(dkgs are decograms), less than 1/2 a kilo to a person. The distribution is very chaotic. People are yelling, screaming, and pushing. The crew now want their salary. We thought they had been paid by Storfer as the captain had. But they evidently were not paid. They say, "If we do not get it now, we will not go."

19/10/40

Some passengers, policemen, Greek administrators, and the captain, together write a petition of how Storfer has cheated us. And also about the Algorinos. The administration of the town promises the crew that they will get their salaries and the coal.

The mood on the boat is better. The weather is very pleasant. We would like to swim in the sea. We now have enough food which soothes our nerves.

20/10/40

The Joint sends the money for the salary for the crew. We will go to Piren for coal and for food. Braun gives the captain a letter of thanks from the passengers to the administrators of Lavrion, thanking them for how kind they have been to us. Braun gives the mayor a French book about Greece as a token of appreciation. Heinz Wurmfeld had bought a camera for \$15.00 which he asks Braun to present to the mayor as a gift from the passengers.

“A man must go into the hostile world,
must work and strive, must plant and provide,
wangle, snatch up, must bet and attempt by pursuing his luck.

Schiller: “The Bell”

21/10/40

Departing from Lavrion at 6:15 a.m. and feeling a heartache to leave this tiny port which meant so much to us. Pkaleron, then Athens with the Acropolis and Lyzabet, this time quite visible, and arriving at Piraeus. Here we are waiting a short time for the police and then accompanied by them, we enter into an enclosed harbor. We are being guarded here by two sailors who row around our ship. We can see from here the port with the camouflaged cisterns of some industrial concern. In the town of Piraeus the terminal of the underground which leads to Athens is quite visible. The Acropolis behind it can barely be seen. There is a great deal of activity at sea, but they say that things are only slightly more active compared with peace time. We notice a submarine leaving. All around in the water there are jelly fish. We pick one up in a tub, but pour it back into the sea again.

22/10/40

Berkowitz's sister has some condensed milk. It came from some of the provisions which had not been officially distributed yet. Berkowitz

was brought before a conciliation court where he was accused of having taken the milk from the store which he was in charge of. However he was acquitted. He claimed having bought the milk from Weinstock in Tulcea. This matter is causing quite a stir. Everybody makes fun of it. Some swear and complain of the dishonesty of those in charge. There is not the slightest doubt that this dirty business is going on, which the trial of Placik provides ample proof.

The passengers on our ship are also very upset about the conditions in the sick bay, where Spilirka has his say, gives his favorites a diet and steals whatever he can lay his hands on. Dr. Saxl may be unaware of it or may pretend so. Honza worked there as a sanitary officer and told me that food rations of those that cannot eat, or, of those on special diets, are being used by those in charge, and that they are able to treat themselves to especially big portions. Consequently Braun put in his resignation, not only because of the thefts committed, but also because he lacked the confidence of the passengers of the transport. However he was asked again to resume his function, and he accepted. Besides, for the time being, he is the only one that can manage.

Kronberger is a good bloke, but he lacks initiative. He lacks energy and is just an Austrian softy. Mr. Levy and others were on the ship. They brought gifts for the children and they told us that the Pentscho, a steamboat of 300 Revisionists, which anchored in Girgurgia and which overtook us in Tulcea, was shipwrecked somewhere in the Dardanelles. Except for four

people, everybody else was saved.

We receive provisions again today. Last night there was a thunderstorm and the ship rocked badly. Many people suffered from seasickness. The captain called for help and at last the police boat arrived and took us to some bay near Salamin or San Georgij.

23/10/40

From here we can see a beautiful naval port with cruisers, submarines, and destroyers. On the coastline we can detect tramways and shipyards. Quite a large boat is being lowered just now. We are getting once more a supply of raisins and meat. Towards evening we are supposed to get a supply of coal and a friend of Mr. Afgerinos, who committed himself to pay 250,000 drachmas to the Joint, for our coal, will come on board. The coal is being loaded until 1:30 a.m.

24/10/40

The harbor police have given us an ultimatum. Our departure was scheduled for today. The four of the crew who were not getting their wages were promised by the harbor captain that he will do everything for them so that they will be getting their pay.

We depart from Piraeus at 14:25 p.m. The sea is calm. At the beginning everything goes well. We have a beautiful sight of the Acropolis. The pilot boat which leads us out of the port, returns to the coast, flanked by the Peloponnesus at the right and by Attica at the left. We are sailing out on

the open sea. We are leaving later than expected and we are proceeding at a rather slow pace because of the poor quality of the coal.

25/10/40

There is quite a swell now. We can see the namesake of our ship, the island, *Milos*, and in the distance there are already the outlines of the mountains of Crete where we are heading for. There is quite a bit of seasickness on board.

26/10/40

We reach Herakliron, but we do not get in before 6:30. The tugboat arrives and takes us into a pretty artificial harbor with a beautiful pier, a wave breaker and a lighthouse where the *Atlantic* is berthed. A small boat arrives with the news that there is some mail for us on the *Atlantic*. We are so happy to see the *Atlantic* and they are equally happy to see us. We are talking to them through a megaphone. They have had on board eleven deaths and one newborn baby. The *Pacific* is supposed to berth in San Nicole on the other side of the island.

In the afternoon we are happily swimming in the sea. For the first time in my life I am swimming in the sea! It is beautiful!

Two people from the *Atlantic* are swimming towards us with a letter. We read it and then we send a reply. At 10 o'clock I am called to the kitchen where Dr. Rosenblatt is distributing the mail on behalf of the *Atlantic*. For me still nothing. But finally, a letter from my mother. My throat tightens when I see once more her rounded hand writing. The letter is from September 20th.

She writes that they have no news from us except the letter from Vienna. I have written at least 20 letters. Perhaps they will receive those we have sent from Greece.

27/10/40

We are getting a new supply of water. At 15:30 the Czechoslovakian military forces (a group of them) are celebrating the 28th of October on the fore-deck. There are now another four people from the *Atlantic* on board. I hand one of them a letter for home. Since Greece I am selling my international reply coupons in order to be able to buy cigarettes. I have at least 180 of them. They fulfill one purpose, that we can smoke again. On arrival in Palestine these coupons will be useless. Since we left Istanbul, except for the rationing of 10 cigarettes which we received no more than three times, we had no cigarettes.

We are departing from here at 17:00 but again because of the poor quality of coal we are proceeding rather slowly.

28/10/1940

Today we have a special luncheon in honor of the 28th of October, potatoes with tomato sauce, but the day has, for us, doubly sad memories. The 28th of October; in the first place; secondly, old Nisel from Brno transport is very ill and he may even die. The sea remains beautiful and calm.

29/10/1940

Nisel's wife is temporarily under my care. She has a daughter in Eretz. Her husband died today at 4:00 p.m. and in the evening at 7:00 p.m. the ship

dropped anchor and blew the sirens during the funeral.

We are going at a very slow pace around Cyprus. The captain suggested that we berth at Larnac. This is quite a daring adventure because we are bound to fall into the hands of the British.

30/10/40

At 9:45 we arrive in Limasol on Cyprus. There is a motorboat with police aboard and customs officers. They are heading towards our ship. For the first time we encounter British soil and the first Britishers. They look in the tropical helmets and the hats of Australian infantry men, rather like some tropical explorers. We take them for real Australians. And now the port. The captain who arrives after anchoring tells us that Greece is at war with Italy. He gives us the "Cyprian Post" and when Braun tells him that we are heading for Port Said, he smiles.

The management finds out about the price of coal which is scarce here and very dear (150%). Braun leaves for town to negotiate the purchase of coal with local Jews. There are only a few Jews here. The richest plantation owner is very cool and reserved. However, he sends us oranges and grapefruits and some other food items. There is a delayed commemoration service taking place for the 28th of October. The celebration was delayed because of the death of old Niesel. It's quite entertaining. The captain takes part in it too, and the English, Czechoslovakian, and later, the Greek anthems are sung. There is a bit of a stir because the Hatikva is not sung. Pepik Gruenhut sings in the evening for Pacek, "On the *Milos* it is wonderful."

31/10/40

Limassol. As we notice this is a nice, clean, little town. There are striped canvas blinds on the coffee houses. And everything blends into the landscape beautifully. We are officially allowed to bathe and we make the most of it. "The Cyprian Post" had an article about us, in which they mention two famous singers who are on board with us.

11/11/40

The local Jews have refused to buy coal for us. We will have to dip into our own pockets and get the 150 + pounds we need. On board a collection of foreign currency is being organized, and also, gold and engagement rings are in high demand, as we do not have enough currency. Upon two appeals made by Braun, we collect approximately 65 pounds. Besides this, the captain and the Jews of the town agree to purchase the typewriter of the revisionists and the drugs from Brno, which will fetch K 9000 in return. All these things have to be carried ashore. I give them half of a golden tooth.

In the afternoon food, fruit and part of the coal arrive. A medical officer and a lieutenant also come on board. They are surprised to find that we are in such relatively good health and considering the terrible conditions we were under, how well the ship's hygiene is being supervised. (But the thieving on board is another thing). Some people ring for them on deck. They are telling us that there were some Poles on the island who saved themselves by

escaping via Rumania.

2/11/40

The second part of the coal arrives. They are returning the engagement rings and wedding bands. The difference was adjusted. When the local Jews learned that even marriage bands were being donated, they realized how desperate our situation was and the provisions are a present from them. Braun promises he will try to persuade the Joint Distribution Committee to return to the people whatever valuable things they have donated.

In the afternoon we depart in a festive mood from Limassol in order to continue the last stage of our journey toward Tel Aviv. Harry Stein plays. Everyone is on deck, singing and waving. The sea is quite rough, but I feel alright. Gradually I am becoming quite an old sailor.

3/11/40

In the morning we notice some mountains on our left shore. They may be in Lebanon. Later we notice smaller hills and a bay. Some people on board say it is the Bay of Haifa with the Carmel range. Suddenly a motorboat appears and stops us with a salvo. English policemen, dressed in overalls, climb on deck. They interrogate the captain and our management announces that they will take us to Haifa. We turn to the left. The hill is really front Carmel and after about an hour of cruising we enter the port of Haifa!

We are all moved to tears. After two months and one day; after 62 days, well, for an illegal transport - almost record time. After good and

horrible moments – we have at last reached our destination. Each of us lost much weight. Tired and exhausted we have arrived. We hardly expected it would end that well.

While we are entering the harbor, other police motor boats are heading towards us, and also, a small funny benign looking steamer called *Roach*. In the inner part of the port we notice a large passenger steamship with three funnels. They say she is French and in the outer part where we anchor, the *Pacific*, (which arrived here yesterday) is berthed.

Our captain thought he could sail into the harbor at midnight for the water we needed and the passengers would disembark, a somewhat naive idea on his part. Haifa looks beautiful. The town stretches at the foot of Mount Carmel, and is white and modern. There is also a railway station in the port. The town seems to us rather small for its 75,000 inhabitants. On the left of the bay are camouflaged oil tanks and some dilapidated huts, perhaps traces of a recent air raid.

A commission of C.I.D. arrives for protocol with the management. The statistics are being recorded according to sex, children and Aryan status. They are surprised that we have passports. The *Pacific* threw theirs into the sea. Braun tells us that Storfer advised them to throw them into the water. But Braun always did the opposite of what Storfer advised. They take the diary from Dr. Barber's wife and inquire where we intended to go. Braun says we are going to go to Tel Aviv. They tell us we are going to stay two more

days on board ship, and then we will go into a camp. They will supply us with provisions. For the time being the atmosphere aboard is quite good, although there is a shortage of food. Around us, the *Pacific* police are cruising with machine-guns, and aboard there is an Englishman with two Arab policemen wearing lambskin caps. The Englishmen are tattooed on their arms and chests, as are most of those in the colonial service.

14/11/40

It is raining today and we bathe in the rain. But the bad weather also affects our mood which is very bad. Today we are reacting to the long, terrible, voyage. We are terribly tired and I feel very weak. Also the provisions are getting scarce and nothing is brought to us from the shore. But in the evening a motorboat finally arrives with bread, oranges and coffee (for the first time). I spend the night on deck. I had an argument with Pavel because of some bread and had to stand on watch the next morning for Loewy.

5/11/40

We hear from a Jewish government official that we will be transferred to a large ship with three funnels, which is berthed in the inner part of the harbors. She is called the *Patria*. She is French, and after the occupation of France, has carried 16,000 English soldiers from Beirut. We shall be disinfected there, and kept quarantined. They are preparing lists of Zionists and of Revisionists, etc; I put my name down as a Zionist and state my former

activity. There is also a warning of an air raid at about 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon. But nothing happens. They chase us back to our bunks.

6/11/40

They are moving the women today from the *Pacific* to the *Patria*. They are being transferred there by covered motorboats which are going to and fro. all day long. After the disembarkation of the *Pacific* it is going to be our turn. A convoy of seven tankers arrived today. It is rather amusing to watch the funny-looking small steamboats sailing ahead to meet them, and how they suddenly sail into the inner harbor that seems to be quite filled up. Each of the seven tankers is pointing a machine gun towards the Jews. I have been angry with Pavel and I am not speaking to him therefore I am sleeping on the roof of the sick bay. The nights are beautiful and warm and it is far more pleasant to sleep there than in the cabins. Every evening one gets together there behind the funnel.

Some wonderful news – Roosevelt has again been elected president and everybody is thrilled. There is a shortage of provisions, mainly bread; one loaf for 5 to 8 people. And that spoils the mood of most, especially the fact that there is plenty of it in Aretz, and that depresses the people.

8/11/40

All the *Pacific* passengers move today to the *Patria*. One of the motorboats calls on us. Some person calls Braun downstairs, with the pretext that he would like to show him the ship, and unobtrusively puts into his pocket

a letter addressed to R. Braun. Braun opens it up and reads the following: “we will be deported and it depends on us to prevent it, and in collaboration with the organization on shore, we should obey exactly further instructions and orders. In the meantime we should form a team which would at any given moment put out of order all the engines, and secondly, it will be necessary for everybody at the moment of departure to jump into the sea and swim ashore.”

Braun delivers the letter to the addressees, who call the functionaries of the Zionist organization and Kronberger for consultation. Braun says he will not allow any act of sabotage. And because of his attitude, a political organization is founded behind his back. Despite the fact that the news we received has to be regarded as secret, everybody on the *Milos* talks about it. Honza comes to me and tells me that he hears that we will be sent to Australia. I think we could make a good start there.

I sleep again on the roof.

9/11/40

We are tonight alone on the ship, because all the women, children, and people from the sickbay are already on the *Patria*. They are distributing the remainder of the food and the provisions. The meals are very good. In the afternoon there is a concert on the foredeck of the *Milos*. And in the evening we continue with a farewell party on the other end. Bach and Debert are the organizers and on board are the English who watch us. In the end, anthems are being sung; and for the crew, a Greek anthem. The stoker,

Dimitrif, is carrying on more than anybody else: Tonight we are sleeping in cabins. I am getting on better now with the boys. However, I am no longer supervisor of the cabins. I gave that up on November 5th, after the quarrel with Pavel, because I wanted to move away from my cabin. My successor is Feuer, whom I recommended to Kronberger, and who has from it quite a "kovod" (Honor).

Our luggage is all prepared and we are looking forward to tomorrow's move. We are told that the accommodations are very good and that most of the cabins have bathrooms and good food.

10/11/40

We get up very early in the morning. We pack our last belongings. We are departing from our second boat, the Milos. I have again finished an unforgettable stage in my life. I quite liked that old boat which brought us here, which held out so bravely.

On the boat I give my track suit to the driver, since we were told they are confiscating them on the *Patria*. We are approaching the *Patria* which rises in front of us like a skyscraper. Franci Gartenberger calls from a porthole, giving me all sorts of news, which tells me that on board the *Patria* it is not exactly as we expected it to be.

At last we go upstairs to the customs control who take my last cigarettes. I go into the bath. The clothes are being disinfected in the hall and they are being returned to us. However the luggage will be dealt with tomorrow. I get dressed and go into the large hall where there are tables and

chairs. This is the second class dining area and I am waiting here for interrogation. There are people from the *Milos*. More are constantly arriving. Our doctors and medical staff are already checked in conjunction with the English policemen and policewomen. I am waiting here about two and a half hours and then it is my turn. I present both identification cards. I state my nationality. Then they take my finger prints and take me through some corridor into a bunker on the fore-end. The bunker is over crowded. I then return to meet Honza and Pavel, and we find a place on the lower foredeck under the canvas which covers the bunker. It is quite a good spot. After that I take a good look at the ship. The *Patria* is a beautiful ship. They say she has about 18,000 tons. There are lots of cabins. The women are accommodated there. She has four decks. She was apparently German, named *Vaterland* and after the First World War had to be turned over to France under the reparations agreements. I start loading provisions, which were brought over by the boat, and I steal bread, oranges, and tomatoes. I am starving since I had nothing to eat all day long. There is a terrible mess with the food. The kitchen is only kosher. Only the *Milos* does the cooking, together with the *Pacific*. Neither have enough boilers, and they are therefore forced to cook three times a-day. The meals for the English are being cooked by the Chinese so they get their meals without any problem.

10/11/40–24/11/40

There is a shortage of food on the *Patria*. In the morning we have only coffee. For lunch, a meat soup, and for dinner, coffee, tomatoes and a half

of one orange and 1/8 to 1/4 of a two kilo loaf of bread and that is not enough. We literally suffer from hunger. The English policemen are quite nasty, We hear that they were beating some people on the very first day.

Two nights I sleep on my place under the canvas. Later I sleep with the boys, Honza and Pavel, with the Czech groups in the Czech bunker. The last night they sleep on the stern. I myself sleep in the big bunker, the second last on the stern, where Schiller is in control. I sleep there but only one night. The bunker is dark and not very airy. My lucky intuition tells me to go into the hall. I take my luggage up with Fritz Rotter, to hall number II. I sleep in the middle of the hall between Hirsch and the fat Beck. It is good here.

We are here inoculated against typhoid and smallpox. Altogether our stay on board the *Patria* is a disappointment. We imagined that we would have a more comfortable life here, that we would be getting better treatment and more food. The people from the *Milos* are housed on the stern. The ones from the Pacific, on the fore-end. The kitchens are also separated. The *Milos* still has an advantage. Because of the cooking utensils of the Revisionists, the rationing and distribution of food goes smoothly and fast. Most of the objections are against the kosher diet, not because it is kosher but because it hinders the smooth running of the kitchen.

Braun gets sick during the first days and he has to lie in the cabin with scarlet fever or some bad flu and he cannot take part in the management of the ship. The *Milos* is led by Kronberger.

On November 15th, Pezdrazil, the major of the Czechoslovakian unit comes on board the ship. He forms a Palestinian troop and promises to recruit people into the army. This military unit consists of approximately 100 members and was founded on the way, by Captain Emil Gruenhut. It's official. Opening with the swearing in took place on October 9th, while we were in the Mediterranean. Honza and Pavel are joining them. I do not.

The transport accepts the news with mixed feelings. The management recognizes them as a unit and it is true that it has been the best organized group to keep together. In a certain way however their influence has not been altogether good, because of their existence and their refusal to see the Jews in terms of a nation, by which they caused a disruption in the unity of the passengers of the transport, which was already weak enough. Although I would like to at all cost to fulfill my obligation towards Czechoslovakia, I do not join, because their leaders don't seem competent to me, and because I hate the "theatrical performance" this group always puts on. Orders, commands, drills, playing soldiers and sympathizing with the English. They sang after all "Hy Slovane." Imagine Slava Edelstein, Porges and Roubicek!!

On the 11th of November the management of the transport sign a petition asking for better food. The rumors of deportation are increasing. Lifesaving belts are being distributed. Pacek sings at the reunion in the Czech bunker, "The *Patria* is waiting, is waiting in the port for news that the end of the Nazis has come, that Benes is back in the Castle; that our country

is free again." He composed it to the tune of the "Marseillaise." But the *Patria* is unlikely to wait. Rumors have it that we may be deported to Australia or South America. Everyday something else, but in the end, all the rumors end in Mauritius.

On November 16th we are told that there are demonstrations in Haifa for us. And on board the ship, Czech, German and Hebrew secret pamphlets are circulated. Coal is being loaded and the crew of the ship seems to be preparing for our departure. The bunkers are filling up. The management remonstrates officially about the dangers of deportation, and points to our hunger strike which ends in a fiasco. Dr. Wolf remarks tactlessly that the management is hoarding the provisions. And we too, complain. In Palestine there is a 12 hour protest strike.

On November 21st the "Palestine Post", the official British newspaper reports that it has sympathy for the victims of the Nazi Regime but illegal immigrants are from the military viewpoint not welcome. And we shall therefore be deported to one of the British Colonies. After the war we will be permitted to return. The Commander of the naval police promises the desperate passengers that we would not be deported to German territory, but to a British Colony. Moreover the British Government undertakes to care for our lives, and our health. The way they are going to treat us, depends entirely on us. I myself, the boys, (Honza and Paul) have nothing against the deportation, and we are actually looking forward to it. To see the Suez, Africa

and the Southern Cross, and such a piece of the world, and on a ship like the *Patria*, would be quite something. In the newspapers there are appeals for collections for us.

The food is slowly improving and is getting more substantial. In the evening several people from the *Pacific* are jumping into the sea and swimming ashore. But they are caught and put under arrest in the ship's prison. We settle down for the evening early. After 5:04 p.m. we are not allowed to leave our accommodations.

23/11/40

The Yishuv sends us gifts and food, and chocolate. Each passenger receives 1/2 kilo chocolate, three oranges and two eggs. Paul saves his chocolate as he will have something to look forward to. The soldiers who are on watch on the ship are called off and the police forces are increased. Somehow the police are very nervous. We have to be in at 5:00 p.m. There are stricter prohibitions against smoking. Nevertheless in the morning I sit in the Dining Room where there is also our transport bureau. I am studying English here. Suddenly a call comes through that the *Atlantic* has arrived. I look through a port-hole, and as a matter of fact the Atlantic is sailing into the inner port. Yet in the morning an English sergeant arrives with some Arabs who are going to make up bunks to sleep on.

We shall be nicely squashed in. They expel us from here onto the promenade deck. And in the evening when I come down, three quarters of the hall is already filled in with bunks. I find myself another spot below a

bunk, but next to a door near some fresh air. The *Atlantic* begins to drop off passengers to our ship. There are already 200 passengers from her on board telling us that they had a rather bad trip. During their voyage fourteen passengers had died. From the fast way the transfer of passengers takes place, we gather that we are going to leave soon.

25/11/40

This day and this date I shall never forget. This day will always remain a sadness for Palestine. In the morning they chased us from our bunks onto the promenade decks. In the evening Honza and Dr. G.Z. Nechalec tell me that we are meeting under the captain's bridge at 8:45 a.m. and at about 9:00 a.m. about 300 people should jump into the water and swim ashore. I tell him that I will go there. I went on deck at about 8:30 a.m. I took a cup and a little bag with bread with me. There, under the captain's bridge, I met Else Lederova, who told me F. was not well. She was up with him all night and now she was resting. At about 8:45 I went to the fore-end of the deck, to the place under the captain's bridge and I found Skutecky waiting near my things. I returned a second time at 9:00 a.m. and closer near the observation tower. Lederova was waiting for me. Ahead of me was Frunk from the Pacific, and R. from the *Milos*, who asked me if I was going to jump too, and I said, "no."

At about 9:07 a.m. approximately 30 people jump into the water, and one or two minutes later I hear a dull rumbling explosion, like the blind shock of a minesweeper. It comes from the left side of the ship, in the front of the promenade deck. It shakes the ship slightly, and one can feel a slight tremor.

The ship is also slightly tilted. Those who jump into the water, swim towards the shore and small motor boats are pursuing them and cruising around them. Most of the passengers believe the explosion is meant to be a signal for somebody to jump into the water or else they take it to be a collision of motor boats.

The ship however, by this time, is leaning now more on the right side. It is evident now that something serious is going on. The crew and the police are running on deck with lifesaver belts on their bodies. And the ship is leaning more and more on its side. I tell Lederova that I am going to look for F and I run to the stern, but an Englishman does not let me go downstairs. I wish I could see Honza and Paul.

The Chinese men are running on deck from the kitchen and next to me stands the French military baker, a combat helmet on his head, a lifesaving belt and a face mask. And besides this attire, he is in underpants. By this time there is no doubt anymore that the ship is sinking, but the baker looks so ridiculous that I cannot help smiling,

A little boy of about ten years old cries. I ask him why, and he tells me that he must urgently go to the toilet. I send him downstairs but I know he won't be able to get there. The people are jumping into the water and the steamships are taking off from the shore and hurrying towards us too. The ship lies almost on her side and the time is 9:15 am.

I notice Mendl letting himself down a rope and jumping into the water.

I realize then that it is time for me to jump as well. On the ship there is a lot of uproar, screaming, crying. The English are cowards, thinking only to save themselves. I start to unlace my "Canadians" (boots). I am completely calm, but I notice that the ship is leaning downwards even further, so I climb over the railing with my boots onto the narrow iron rim of the inner side of the ship. Holding on to the railing, I land on a sitting police officer and finally I reach the cable on which Mendl went down. I let myself down the cable. Unfortunately it does not go any further, and the last bit I am sliding down the exposed keel on my bottom. The growth on the keel, of coral, shells and salt, thoroughly scrapes my backside. However, I don't feel this at the moment and I swim away from the ship to the left because I am afraid of the whirl.

From the water I can see the extent of damage and misfortune. I swim towards the harbor, and after about two thirds of the way, I am picked up by a soldier in a motorboat who points his rifle at me so I don't get away to the shore. So I take my jacket off and help rescue other people from the water. The boat is taking us into port. It is the steamboat *Steady* or the *Roach*, I am not sure which anymore.

After I relax, a great agitation takes hold of me. I don't know where the boys are (Honza and Paul) and I burst into frantic crying. I notice a sailor trying artificial respiration on somebody who does not move and the awfulness of the catastrophe hits me. I continue crying for my brothers. The wounds on my backside are starting to hurt now. I am told that all the

passengers were saved, but I knew such a thing was not possible.

Crowds of people are milling around the back near the cables which tie the ship to the pier. People hang on to the cables. The Patria lay on her side and it appears that she is no longer sinking. However, at 9:25 a.m. she turns over within 14 minutes. The captain of the ship walks on the tilted side and fulfills his duties until the last moment.

People are now descending on ropes and ladders directly into boats. On the fore-end they are trying to drop a lifeboat. The small steamer is now driving to the shore and arrives at the dock. I notice Major Petr on the quay looking at the Patria. I call him and run towards him begging him to find out what has happened to the boys.

Then I walk into the hall of a large depot. It is quite empty with some filled up bags. There are already quite a number of people here. I am looking for the boys, but I cannot find them. I get here at 9:30 in the morning. Not quite far from the middle of the hall behind an iron post I set up my camp and take off my boots. Soldiers are distributing blankets, cigarettes, tea with milk, sandwiches. They are telling me that my brothers are on the pier. They saw them and spoke to them. I hope it is true. They are coming now with clothes. I really don't care for clothes. All I want is to see the boys. At last, in the afternoon, Jindra Polak arrives and gives me a message from my brothers that they are alive and well and that I'll be seeing them before long. Indeed after 3:00 p.m. people arrive from the pier and at last, the boys!

We realize now that we have not lost each other, although all our belongings were left on the Patria. My mother's jewelry sewed into the lining of my coat went down with the boat. But we are alive.

The Czech group is getting together. I get myself some trousers and a shirt, and in the meantime, my "Canadian"(boots) have been stolen; the only solid thing I had saved so far. I have also my fountain pen and my watch. (which still works), and a notebook with addresses.

In the evening, at about 6:30 p.m., the transport of people move into a camp. I leave with the others at the exit hall. We get into a bus and drive through blacked out Haifa into the country. After a thirty minute journey we notice a lit up square on the right side, and we imagine that this is going to be our new home, Atlit. In fact, there is a turn in the road And in a few minutes we descend. We pass through three gates with barbed wire into wooden barracks where there are 30 bunks with mattresses.

The Bulgarians, who accompany us inside have already spent four months in this camp. They are telling us that yesterday they were on a hunger strike for us. They are taking us into a depot, where we get three blankets, pillows, cups, plates and cutlery, and a very cordial, "Shalom" from them. They have been informed about our disaster. We are also getting coffee at night.

The boys leave the hall with the Czech group and are living in another barrack. It was presumed that the Czech group would go into a different

camp. I say good-bye to my brothers.

At 9:00 p.m. we go to sleep, but sleep does not come. My nerves are too upset. I am thinking about all the terrible happenings which I experienced today. The *Patria* was evidently the result of sabotage. I wonder who must have done it. Which group? People on the ship? Or from the country? I deplore it and condemn it. There were many people on board for whom Palestine meant the final destination of their voyage. Parents had children in the country and vice versa. There were family ties, and after all, even for the Zionists it would not be a trifle to be deported from this country which should be one's homeland. But nobody had the right to take a human life and risk the lives of others even for the price of deportation. I am a Jew and feel like a Jew, but such a thing There is no doubt it is going to have great consequences.

26/11/40

In the morning I walk out of the hut and I meet the boys. There is a canteen there The Bulgarians are in charge of it and I am pawning a bit of gold for 100 Mils, to buy cigarettes. I meet here Alfred Brods, a draper, and his son in law, and the young boy of Berkus from Pribram. They arrived here on the *Liberdad* from Bulgaria.

Down in the disinfecting room 20 photos appear, of the victims of yesterday's catastrophe. The Fleischmann boys lost their father and mother, and many people are missing; amongst them - Lajosek, Rozik Loewy. There are seven missing from the eight member family Hojda. And Vally Schick,

Schapirova, Manelesova, Kuceroval, Feuer, Erica Kleinova and her brother Rudi, Gartenbergova and many others. In the afternoon I am going to see the doctor. I have a slight temperature from the cuts on my bottom. They hurt.

27/11/40

The Bulgarian transport that was here yesterday departed for Sarafant, another camp near Tel-Aviv. Previously the English had promised them that they would be set free.

Only now I start looking around and taking in the surroundings of Atlit. Atlit is a nice camp. There are 64 huts here. The main road divides the camp into two parts. Each half has four blocks. On each side there are three toilets and three washing facilities with showers. The houses are 20 meter long wooden buildings.

They have a small annex with a night toilet, which is not in use, two entrances, and 19 windows; ten on one side and nine on the other, which have no glass but meshed wires and window frames. Inside there are beds. They are actually boards on trestles. Compared with the conditions on the *Melk*, the *Milos*, or the *Patria*, an unexpected comfort. The administration buildings are outside behind the barbed wire. There are three wired fences; one inner very thick one, about 5 meters high, three meters behind it a middle lower one, consisting of about seven wires and about 25 meters behind it, the outer fence.

The Kafirs and the English who are guarding us are walking with

guns between the middle and the outer fence. For unexpected calamities they have little watch towers of metal sheets with loop-holes. Kafirs are working inside the camp. They are Jewish assistant police. They are unarmed, in case we should try to disarm them. Grant, the commander of the camp is the captain of the police force. He limps. He only goes on inspections. Female Kafirs are in charge of the female compound. The highest in rank of the Kafirs is Sergeant Markmann, a very likeable man with a sense of humor. The administration buildings are behind the inner fences, and the quarters of the Kafirs and the English. A guard room is at the entrance.

The hospital is very nice and quite large. It is in the middle of the camp and Dr. Auerbach is in charge of it. He is a German Jew. Opposite are the disinfection rooms and the bath. In one hut there is a depot. There are two kitchens, one "milechig" and the other "fleischig". One does the cooking strictly kosher. Many boys from the Czech group work there as well as in the store(depot). The menu: breakfast; coffee and marmalade; lunch; soup and a small piece of meat; dinner :coffee, cottage cheese and a small portion margarine. Plenty of bread.

On the westerly side of the camp behind the middle plateau, there are rocks, and behind them about 100 meters, is the sea, which can be seen only from the roof of the building. Singer from Brno is in charge of the quarters where I am staying. It is quite a pleasant building (No. 50).

28/11-4/12

Life has its routine. We move into building No. 47, on side B and the women are on Side A. At the counting of people, which is conducted according to a list of illegal immigrants that were to be transported to Mauritius by the S/S Patria, we gather that we should have been sent to Mauritius. Kornfeld and Kazi who were detained for interrogation in Haifa, returned. Braun, who recovered from his sickness, was also interrogated. He stops me and Arnost Heller, and asked me what I know about the whole catastrophe. I tell them of my discussion with H. and G. before the catastrophe without mentioning any names.

In the evening there are unofficial walks on the main street. We are walking a lot with Mendl. They bring over the luggage which was saved from the Patria. I am at the collection. It's not bad, but not enough. None of our things, the boys or mine, were saved.

5/1

In Palestine there is some news today, that those who survived the catastrophe are allowed to stay in the country. The editor says in the editorial, that we are most likely going to get certificates.

Once more we are moving from B to A. The women remain here too in the lowest and highest blocks, because they are supposed to fill one building with double the amount of people, and because into my building they moved people I don't like. (some Viennese Jews).

I decided to move to my brothers, where the Czech group is, No. 60. One has to sleep on the floor and there are 60 of us. In charge is Karel

Roubicek. The fences between the buildings and the main street are being reinforced. Arabs are working on this job and the holes through which one can get out have disappeared. In the evening, on the other side, the people from the *Atlantic* came, who in the meantime had been in Acre. To communicate with them is impossible.

6/12-8/12

We have only phonetic communication with the people from the Atlantic. They throw money from the other side, across the road and we buy cigarettes for them, and throw them back.

In the morning we find out that the *Atlantic* people will be deported to Mauritius. I quickly search for Franc Freud's cousin, Karl Epstein, and tell him that we shall try to send news to Prague that he is well. In the evening we are jailed by the Kafirs in crifs, but we escape again through the windows of the toilet.

9/12/40

Since 4:00 a.m. in the morning we hear piercing cries and screams. Immediately after sunrise we leave the locked up bunks. The opposite side is also empty. The *Atlantic* people stage a lie-down strike. They have stripped naked, and stay stretched out on their beds, and refuse to leave. The English, not the Kafirs, go first for the men and pull them out by force. They beat them with bars and succeed in getting them out. Then with the help of police women from Haifa, and some nuns from the hospital, they remove, carry, and lead out the women. It is awful. They are beating them

up. They pull them across the floor, and heap undergarments on them. The Arabs started loading luggage.

In the evening we are again locked up.

10/12

Wolf, our commander of the camp in conjunction with the committee of the Zionists agrees to a protest strike, which should take place today. It ends in a fiasco. At noon they knock the food out of the hand of the people who line up for some meal. In the afternoon they order a commemorative service for the victims of the *Patria* on which Katz and Gebl speak. And in the evening they distribute the meal for the whole day. After that one day fast we started eating again, until we burst. This could not impress the English. In the end we have to stick it out.

The quarters of the buildings are always to be closed in the evening. I wish I could get out of No. 60. All day long women are coming in and it is embarrassing to look at that brothel of gentlemen and sisters; although I cannot say of myself that I am some kind of Puritan.

In Haifa there is a fake air raid. We are told that the purpose of the air raid was to chase away throngs of peoples who got together to demonstrate against the deportation of the *Atlantic*. We hear also that the Kafirs are very upset about it. They say that because of all of this the English ordered a special squad of police, whom they call the "entirmiss."

11/12-23/12:

Thirty people who were in the catastrophe were put into prison

in Haifa, because they were the first to jump into the water. They all returned today. They received a noisy welcome. Amongst them was Fuchs from the hospital. I cannot understand how he got mixed up in it. Furthermore, in the blocks, on the lower side, we erected a tent, and all the things which came from the *Patria* were placed there. They are being distributed in such away, that people stand around in a circle and are shown the articles. Everybody claims his property, and sometimes for somebody else. Dr. Ungar-Moller is in charge of it, but the main "machar" is Heinz. I believe he is doing quite well for himself.

On 15/12 we are finally liquidating No. 60, and the people left over from No. 60 and No. 61, set up in No. 57, the third Czech quarters. In charge of this hut is Ing. Emil Tusch. All of us here are not from our group. Myself, Ing. Winternitz, Ing. Polak, my neighbour, Anler, Freimuth and old Mueller, are not in the group.

On December 16th the Bulgarians return from Sarafant. With them, old Brod, with his daughter. They tell us, that they had a better time there. Wolf is very successful with the commander of the camp. He gained permission for common outings and visitation between men and women, between the 12th to the 16th.

I am now in a work team which loads the rubbish and carries wood into the kitchen. Debert is In charge of it. There are 16 of us. Honza, Dr Brod, Dr. Kraus, Dr. Weiss, Zeisel, are there too. We are getting in return for Zubus, halva and oranges daily. There is ample opportunity for stealing, and

I am making a record with Honza - 70 pieces for one load. We now have money, because I pawned all my gold with Ervin Kohn, for the amount of L.P. 1.500. He is a rogue, but what else can be done?

24/12

Tonight for the celebration of "Chanuka" - speeches, toasts, and etc.

25/12

Tonight a commemoration of the writer Karel Capok, Our Honza gives a talk followed by a discussion. We also enjoy the account of Jindra Fantel about Spain.

27/12

The library, which was at the beginning very poor, is now very good. They have very good books there. However most of them are written in German.

Typhoid has broken out among us and affects mainly the people from the *Pacific* despite, the fact that we were inoculated. There are ten people hospitalized and altogether four died. Once in awhile the Chevra Kadisha arranges identification of dead bodies (from the *Patria*). Two or three officials arrive with a suitcase, in which they have numbered bags that contain clothing from unidentified bodies. And according to these, the survivors recognize and identify who the dead were. It is a terrible experience, unnecessary, and useless and upsetting, for those who have grieved already over the loss of their loved ones. There are altogether 250 people missing.

It is common knowledge that some escaped from the hull - Dr. Wolf, and his wife, all the Rotters, Travicik, Rottbnbergerova with her child, and others. The number of those people that have escaped however, is negligible; and it is quite certain that at least 200 people are dead. It is terrible We lost little Layesh!

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This life alone was worth the lot. From my quarters on the *Milos* have gone Layesh, Rozik, Feuer, Manelesova Kucerova Kleinova-, Gartenbergova, eissbergova, Nisslova (whose husband died in Cyprus), Sternberg, Felde.

That means eleven people out of 64 people... It is a total of 20%. That is terrible. Sternberg has a sister here, well provided for; Niselova, Weissbergova, Kleinova, Feuer had children and relatives. These people do not even get the bodies.

31/12

New Year's Eve. We are celebrating without alcohol. Despite this, we are in high spirits. From the start the general mood is gloom. Everybody thinks of home and wonders about the future; but it ends with jokes and laughter, and intrigues.

1941

1/1-31/1

The New Year perhaps will bring us a better time than the one we had, and perhaps we shall see again our sweet mother and Franci.

The life in the camp continues to pass in the same way. There are demonstrations against Wolf for petty reasons, which are plotted by those in charge of the management of the *Milos* and the Czech team. There is no justification for it. It is true that Wolf is no genius. But on the other side he is 100% honest and a good man. He had a good name with the English, and has achieved a lot for us. Not even the Archangel Gabriel could (would try) to achieve that much.

As reprisals for the demonstrations we are now under house arrest for a whole week. The camp has a new English Commander, Wilson, a very good-natured fellow. Grant is his superior. But at the moment he is in Atlit.

17/1/41

The Bulgarians are supposed to be released this day. They are already here six months. Since their release does not take place, they are staging a hunger strike. They stopped it three days later, after some persuasion by Socknut. WIZO are sending a lot of clothing, some in good condition. Others, rags

Honza and Pavel received from the *Patria* their rucksacks, their boots, their trench coats; and Pael, some tools. He now has plenty of work. The gold I sell to Evin Kohn for L.FI.1950. We therefore have money for cigarettes. At about the 25th of January, Lamm had sent us a parcel with toilet things like soap, chocolate and cigarettes. I wrote to him on 25/12 (1940). And a week later I sent him a reminder, because Honza insisted on it. Now the mail

has crossed, I hope he won't be offended, because the parcel has arrived. I had written to George Mautners, to Littaup, to Robert Schenk, to Epler. The Czechoslovak consulate and the military mission are doing their best to help the Czech team. We get frequent visits from army officers who talk in the guard room to Gruenhut and Haller. They are also sending clothing and cigarettes.

I resigned from my working team at the end of January. It is not worthwhile. Work was all the time increasing and "Zubus" less.

I am locked up in the guard room 24 hours. Parker comes to change the blankets. I hide a fourth blanket in front of him in a box under the bed. He sees it, jumps at me, and pulls it out saying; "Here with your bloody blanket, Sonny boy!" I could not help laughing about this "Sonny boy."

However, he becomes terribly upset because I dare to laugh. He pulls me out of the quarters, and downstairs to Stradwick. He is swearing all the time, and says, "Your bloody blanket, your bloody box. You are bloody, I am bloody. Do you think I am a bloody fool?" I assure him that he is not a bloody fool, but it does not help.

Stradwick sends me into the guard-room where I stay for about two hours at first, and then till the next morning, from 8:00a.m. until 9:00 a.m. On the following day I stay behind the "armory" (where the Kafir guards are sleeping).

Cigarettes and food are brought to me by my brothers, also a blanket, a pillow too, so that it was quite comfortable there, and I do not miss much.

All the day I am observing a pair of field mice, and I keep on throwing bread crumbs to them. I sleep well in the company of the Kafirs and the next morning, at 9:00 a.m. I am released.

12-28/2

From the very first day that I am released in the camp there is each day a different "bonke." One, that we shall be released soon, and next, that it is out of the question. And nobody knows anything. In the newspapers there are only occasional discoveries of more victims of the Patria. At night and at 8 a.m. the radio news is read to us. One person from each block goes to listen to the radio in the quarters of the Kafirs. I attend lectures in history and politics every Monday, which are conducted by Blany. Although he is a fascist and a demagogue, his history lectures are very interesting.

The Zionists have some discussion every week. I am attending these too. Katz or Frank are lecturing. We have classes in Ivrit (Hebrew). Mendl organizes them. They are going well for two months, but then they disintegrate. The reason for this is that the Czech group reckons they will join the army. They see no sense in studying Ivrit, which they will not need. I am reading a lot, mainly Jewish books, by Prinz, Kastain, Buber, etc. Pacik organizes classes in English. Honza and I are very keen on English. We are attending classes for advanced students. Paul attends the one for beginners. Other than this, life is quite boring here.

An unpleasant matter, which as of late is very much on my mind, is no

more worrisome. It rains a lot. Life is then worse, mainly because Atlit is covered everywhere with mud. There is enough food. But the lunches, thanks to the kosher people are awful. Their famous cabbage soup will haunt me until my death. We get it three times weekly. We are writing home, via the Red Cross. I wrote to Ing, Wotrassek, Andolf, Hostovsky and Gold.

Our evening entertainment is to pull down bunks, which were made up for the night. And after the lights are turned out we are still telling jokes, and talking. At 10:00 p.m. one sleeps. Jindra Fantl is in charge of quarters. He is the successor of Karel Stein. The biggest discussions there, are of course, in the sphere of politics. That is about the only entertainment we have. But beside all this a very good topic for discussion is the kosher people, and Palestine. I don't support the kosher people because of their tyrannical attitude in the kitchen. They even try to prohibit the smoking of cigarettes on Saturday. They prohibit the importation and the selling of oranges in the canteen. They are unbearable.

However, stupid talk - without reason - hateful, against the country and nation, (which after all, keeps us alive), disgusts and upsets me. Every fool, idiot, that does not see the tip of his nose- brushes away all the good things, the Jews have done; and does so, because he does not like the idea of being Jewish and is ashamed of being Jewish. In spite of my rather otherwise left wing convictions, I cannot feel anything but being Jewish. However, I must admit that most of my soul and heart belong to the Czechs. I have lived amongst them for thirty years. And my mentality from my upbringing (being

reared) and culture (socialization) makes me undoubtedly one of them. However, I was always conscious of my Jewish affinity; but joining the Zionist Activists in 1927 did not make a Jew out of me. I felt like a Jew during my secondary education, in the gymnasium; why and how, I do not know. But I don't have to explain it. It is a fact. My brothers say they have no attachment to the Jews; and I do not try to persuade them otherwise.

They are, however, nurtured in Jewishness that is more powerful than they realize. And many other people here too. Although we have never seen in our family anything pronouncedly Jewish, we always lived as Jews, without religious upbringing, and without consciously ingrained Jewish national feelings, however. And that is in all of us, and in the special nationalistic group, which I call the "Czech Clique," which consists of the majority of people who change their political convictions according to the situation for their own economic reasons, especially those Jews from Brno who hung around the coffee house, the "Esplanade." There are quite a few such people. Unfortunately they are blind to the truth and they are afraid of reality, of their Jewishness. My affinity to the Czechoslovakian nation as a Czechoslovakian citizen cannot be denied. Without doubt there is no question that I have to fulfill my obligation. My duty binds me. But nationally I feel only as a Jew. There cannot be doubt either way that if the social order changes undergoes a radical change the Jewish question must be solved. And thence, the solution to the Jewish question is answered by having a territory where Jews will be free to settle.

1/3-31/3:

In the Palestine Post of 8/3, there is news about the victims of the *Patria*. 192 bodies were recovered from the sea and 62 are still missing. At the end of March the total amount of dead is 198. I have no words for this. It can be assumed that 53 people escaped; this seems to me a rather large number. But I know there were people who managed to escape between the 20th and 24th of November, before the catastrophe on the *Patria*.

12/3/41

Purim.- Religious services are held in a few blocks.

13/3

Sunday: The chief rabbi from Jerusalem is here. Honza says that he resembles the teacher, Syk, from Pribram. And Honza is indeed right. But he really looks magnificent wearing a long black robe, and on his head, a blue cap. In front of him walks his servant, in the uniform of a hotel porter, and carries a large Turkish saber. The servant is called "Katas." He is an attendant with a semi-official role, and this is quite usual here in the East.

A very nice Purim celebration was held in the community room. The rabbi's children were there, and the Bulgarians took part.

In the block, there was a very nice cabaret; which had a second performance on 14/3. This was a very good program, with Stein, Walter Bach. Schoenwald, etc.

Outside visits are now permitted. At 10 a.m. in the morning buses will

be arriving on Sunday from Jerusalem; Monday and Tuesday from Haifa and Tel-Aviv. The person who receives the visitor is called to the gate by the block commander. On one side, the commander stands between the inner and middle fence. Outside behind the middle fences stands the visitor. In this way, the visitor and the prisoner are allowed to communicate at a distance of four meters. Gifts of money are scrutinized by the guards in the Guard's Room.

Another mental uplift here are the 'legal immigrants'. They are people who have certificates or visas and have to be Interned here, for about 20 days; or for longer, or shorter periods of time.

The first of these 'legal immigrants,' are the Rumanians, Jugend and Aliap. They gave us an account of the situation in Rumania and the pogroms, taking place there. Next arrived a few capitalists who paid 10 L.P. for one block for themselves and their families. However, we considered them illegal because of their arrogant and pompous behavior. Within a few days they cooled down. Next came a lot of poor and rich, young and old people, from Central and Eastern Europe; Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Rumania, Russia., Bulgaria., Hungary, Yugoslavia, from the German Reich., and the Protectorate. Because of all this, space had to be made for the Rumanians, who were housed in four blocks. We then received three more people, and about six more legal Poles; and four Rumanians. Jugand-Alias, from Yugoslavia.

1/4 – 26/4:

The Czech group, or block No.57, is making itself, quite a reputation, here in Atlit. First, at the beginning of April, Jindra Fantl and my brothers instigated a terrible row against the Koshers. The latter returned the meat, which arrived in crates sealed as Kosher from Haifa with the objection that it was "trefe." The first evening after this, there is a dispute with Wolf and another big row. Approximately two days later, the Koshers sent the meat back again a third time. Some sent them back the cabbage soup in such a way: Captain Forges, with old Mueller poured the cabbage soup on the kitchen floor and gave the adherents of Kosher cooking a piece of their minds. The Kafirs on behalf of the Kosher people, reacted to this incident only later in the evening. A Kafir came to our quarters to find out who poured out the soup. Porges alone admitted it. After a short discussion with Jindra Fantl old Mueller admitted it too. When asked by the Kafir what his name was, he answered "Ich heisse leg moch." Perhaps, three times in a row. The Kafir wanted to take Old Mueller away. The Kafir pushed him. The other inmates strongly objected and he carried the dear Kafir out. My brother Pavel gave Old Mueller one of his fists. The Kafir is fulfilling his duty.

Gibian unexpectedly calls the English. They come. And old Mueller has to pretend that he has ruptured a hernia. He is carried to the hospital; from where he is returned in 20 minutes. And then the interrogation. The Kafir takes Wilson away from the kitchen. There are fears that he may lose his job. Nobody wants this. Politically this is a great mistake; because the camp is in line with the Czech team solidly, (about the meat affair). And it is

said, they are beating the Kafirs, and that they are calling the Jews on to the English, etc; And the Kosher people like anybody else, like any other clerical party, know how to turn all these incidences to their advantage. The Czech team, after all, does not know anything else, and makes a bad name for itself. They seem to be loyal to each other, but their diplomatic abilities are poor. The whole affair remains meanwhile unfinished. Only Gibian, Fantl, and Gruenhut are interrogated by Wilson.

Amongst the legal immigrants is also Mrs. Meyer from Vienna. Her name was Fischer, and she originally came from Pribram. I hear about her through Mrs. Forges. I visit her daily, and I introduced her to my brothers; and I tried to make a good impression on her. She has a son, who works at Panora, at a taxi firm, and a daughter. She is related to Bergman, a professor at the university in Jerusalem, who is also from Pribram, maybe from Chrastic. Mrs. Fischer went to school with Aunt Maranka; and she knew dad and the whole family. She left here before Pesach.

On the 11th of April was Erev Pesah. We held a Seder ourselves and celebrated in our room. A certain legal immigrant called Koerner says the prayer. He is a Polish, a very pleasant orthodox man; with a modern outlook, appropriate to the 20th century. We have a rather wobbly folding table (which collapses twice during the prayers) and the wine spills all over our beautiful tablecloth. We decide we had enough. Therefore, we finish our meal in our bunks without prayers. The dinner is very good (with two portions of Matzaknoedl) but only one egg for dinner, with a little piece of butter without

bread. That is not sufficient.

After Pesach we are all very glad to have bread again.

During Pesach all the legal immigrants are leaving except those who were planning to immigrate to South America. They are waiting here in Palestine for a ship that leaves in May. They don't have a transit visa.

The weather is now beautiful. However once in a while there is a shower.. It is warm, not hot. The nights are beautiful, clearer and nicer than at home. More stars and the moon, much clearer. After 9:30 pm there is usually an assembly on the grounds and we have fun. We often stay till late at night. The Bulgarians who live there are not very pleased with us. Because of the noise they cannot sleep but everybody ignores it.

I must also mention that we have a celebration on the occasion of President Masaryk's birthday. It is organized on my own thoughts in conjunction with Mendl. It takes place on the assembly square. Mendl gives a talk first in Czech; followed by another speech in German by Wolf. This is followed by another speech in Czech by Gruenhut then another speech in Hebrew by Goldberg (the former secretary of the Jewish Community Centre), and then Pilsen. Also a very good speech. Beside this celebration, the Czech Group has another celebration at 1:00 a.m. with the Kafirs. The Czech Consul, Glazer, was here from Haifa, the Swedish Consul, and the Chairman of the Red Cross in Palestine. Two Czech Officers were also there and another functionary was there. I. myself was not there; but according to my brothers it was very good.

However, the ambitions of the Czech groups are somewhat dampened; they hoped they would be released soon. Dr. Saxl claimed he had heard the news on the radio; and now, since they have been in Atlit; they have turned into pessimists, and they have become skeptical. They are also depressed, but they are not alone. What disturbs people is the political situation; the victory of Hitler in Yugoslavia, the progress he made in Greece and in Libya, etc.

The drill that we had (before) regularly, except Saturday, 4-5, is discontinued by Gruenhut. In case we do not get out of here, out of Atlit by May; and should Czech Military Forces. also stay here; the discontinuation of the drill would lead, without a doubt to general demoralization in the camp. Demoralization would not be surprising after all these six months of promises, and nothing else. I forgot also to mention that Moshe Shertok (the leader of the political section "Sochen") was here on 11/4. He talked to the Bulgarians who are demonstrating and protesting, because they want to be released. They were beating up Dobrovsky, as well as a few others. The C.J.D. was defending this; and telling the Bulgarians, that they should be patient. And then in the evening, on the Assembly Place, Moshe Shertok gave a talk in Hebrew and in German.

And today on 26/4 I continued with my diary. I had delayed writing it. I had to reconstruct it, according to some notes I made as well as from memory, and based it also, on the diary of Jindra Fantl. Now I am going to

continue writing regularly again.

22/4-30/4

The canteen was originally in the hands of Ing. Novak, Kazi Laufer, Herzog,, and Irvin Kohn. The first three are from the Czech Group. They have stupidly resigned. The Czechs were supposed to be released on 7/3. Now they are sorry. Their share (in the Canteen) was taken over by Erich Rothschild; and there is talk that Wolf is participating secretly in this takeover. The goods are supplied by some businessman from the village Atlit Now the supplier is 'Sochnut." It is working famously, and there is certainly a lot of money being made. Laufer, together with Waldstein, manufactures ice cream.

There is a lot of business activity in the camp, with all sorts of things, oranges, dates, sandwiches, cakes, clothing, footwear. Everything can be bought. By the way, I had my boots resoled. They were stolen from me in the hall; and I found them on one of the passengers from the *Pacific* and I took them from him. For the repair of the boots, I gave 30LP to "Circus", which is now managed by Brundl. The old crew of the "Circus" was suspended; and the things have been partly given away, and partly handed to the English. I received three blankets. I made a pair of shorts from one blanket. Schiller, cut the rest up, and F. was sewing them.

Around the 15th they started building new bunks, on the easterly side of the fence similar to those we have, but made out of brick, rather than wood,

because of a shortage. There are many speculations as to who the occupier of these bunks would be; soldiers, military hospital, a transport from Acre..

I forgot to record, that I was again locked up from 4 pm to 8 a.m. This was at the end of March. Mrs. Meyer, a legal immigrant, whom I wrote of before was the person whom I was showing some photograph of our dad when an English sergeant saw me. At 3:45 they had whistled to count us up. The Sergeant ordered me to the guard-room.

The atmosphere in the camp is again very pessimistic; because of the political events and the progress made by the Germans.

The Czech Group received indirectly from outside, some news about an early release; and this news lifts their moral. The wildest rumors, about the release of inmates throughout the whole camp are circulating; that one may be released on the 3rd, the 10th, the 15th, and the 25th (of May) or that there is no chance of our release whatsoever. Everybody knows something different; and the news is supposed to be 100% authentic. However Wolf, after a discussion with Wilson, reports that there is no date settled yet. The final decisions has to come from the high commissioner. The only real news we are getting comes from the radio or the newspapers. It is not good at all.

There is still another matter, of which I have not written before. This is the trial of Rosenblatt, the legal advisor of the management of the transport. On the *Milos* he somehow insulted the Czech team. Consequently, he was accused by Old Mueller; that he, (Rosenblatt) had embezzled some boarding

passes on the *Melk*, and, he collected form letters which were international coupons (wrongly delivered to us). The affair of the trial was dragged out for quite a long time. Nothing could be proven, except for the matter of the letters (coupons). I think he (Rosenblatt) was another victim of the Management. They were all stealing and he alone knew too much about the hospital, and the goings on there. Dr. Rosenblatt, however drowned when the *Patria* sank.

1941 5/1:

The first of May (Labor Day) was celebrated in the camp. We did not work. The Kosher people objected to it; insisting that it was not a holiday. We finally won.

2/5-15/5

We have a new job - the grass. Each day four people from each bunk are sent to the main street. The Sergeant of the Kafirs takes them over there. They are given tools, and they are pulling out the grass between the fences. Before we even get there a third of the people run away. And another third disappear in a while, too. And at 10:00 a.m. when the visitors come there is no one left anymore. And it is already time for the whistle to blow.

A day in Atlit is very boring. In the morning, we get up at 7:30 a.m. After tidying up I lie on the bunk and read. And at 10 a.m. there is an inspection. It is usually Stradvick who is in charge of it. Lunch is at 12:00.

Since April 12th we can go out, that means the women can arrive. At

12:00 is lunch. At 4 p.m. we are counted, and at 5:00 p.m., dinner. At 7:30 Allfuss brings the news. We get together at 9:30 p.m. Afterwards, I usually go out with somebody for an hour. At about 11 p.m. I go to bed. Most of the day I read. I have read some very good books, Roda Roda Panduren and Heymann Chevalier von Geldern.

The weather is beautiful. Since the middle of April there has been no rain. It is not very hot. Only once there was a nice strong Chamsin blowing for 24 hours in the desert, and it was above 40 centigrade in the shade. That day I took a shower 8 times.

The Sabbath day is full of leisure. One does not work. One gets up at 8:30. Only the Kosher people are allowed to cook. However the chief rabbi does not allow the heating up of meals, and that is done by the "shabbos goy," Walter Hermann, from one of the crifs. The lunch is cold: Eggs, tomatoes, and oil. From that we make a sandwich spread.

Paul is earning quite a bit of money, and therefore we always have some cigarettes: quite a lot of cigarettes are being distributed. I, myself, am making coat hangers, and I am also earning.

On about May 10 a legal transport from Hungary arrived. One of its members, Loewingrer, brought me some greetings from Bratislava, from Haeker, and a message that my mother and Francis are well. He, (Haeker), gave an address in Switzerland to me which we can write to.

We of course, were overjoyed to hear that our family knows we are well in Atlit. One man from this legal transport is a graduate of the

Conservatorium of Bratislava! and so, one morning we had a concert of classical music, Bach, Mozart, and Mendelssohn. Within two days these legal immigrants were released.

16/5

In the afternoon a conscription takes place by the Block Commander for drivers and mechanics. The list had to be complete and handed over to Wilson. Dobrovsky had rung from Jerusalem. There is a demand for these people to maintain and drive American vehicles to Alexandria. Naturally I put my name down; and my brothers too, Pavel, as a mechanic.

About 150 volunteers, unfortunately not enough. Many people here are of the opinion, that after a six month wait, they can stick it out longer. Perhaps, they are right. but I want to get out of here as soon as possible.

The escape of Hess from Germany, is only a subordinate topic of discussion. Everybody talks mostly of differentials, carburetors, and motors, etc.

17/5

Saturday "bonkes" have struck fertile ground again. We hear that within 14 days the camp must be liquidated. Rumor has it that they are going to build an airport beside the camp. They say Wilson broke the news. Although I consider this all unlikely, and rather confusing, it gives us nevertheless, a stimulus, and suppresses the bad mood, caused by the arrival of Germans in the Syrian Airport, and also caused by the situation in

the Balkans

In the afternoon Block commander Schwarz officially gave us all that news.

18/5

In the morning Wilson assembled the block commanders, and officially denied everything. And we fall into a worse mood than before, because the length of our stay is unpredictable. In case the northern part of the country would be exposed to attacks by the enemy, and also, in case of bombardments by the enemy, we would be moved to another camp in the south. The matter of the conscription of mechanics and drivers completely fell through. As of yesterday a commission was supposed to come here, but did not arrive.

Mrs. Mayer whose son lives with Lamm, wrote to F. to ask Lamm to send us something. He told her Lamm would be visiting us soon. He was here with a car to pick up some legal immigrants. And he asked for us. The Kafir did not allow Honza nor me to go to the gate, only Pavel was allowed to leave. However when Pavel got to the gate Lamm was no longer there. Nevertheless, Lamm had left a message with Old Mueller that he will be visiting us soon. But since then he had not reappeared. He had left one more message.

After an inquiry at the Red Cross, we are expecting some news from home. We found out a lot of mail was being sent forward. However, we still have nothing.

Today, despite the bad political news, everybody seems to be in good spirits. The Czechoslovak Minister for social security sent the Czech military unit money for everyone, LP 1.22. They gave each soldier half a Lstq, and the rest was deposited by the major (most likely to the bank). The rest will be paid after the soldiers are released.

Soldiers are released. My brothers together received 1 Lstq. and so we have money again. Most of the people in the unit have a ball. The atmosphere in the camp is definitely improving. Yesterday legal immigrants arrived again - 120. A commission was here today regarding air raid defense measurements. The possibility of an air raid is about 1 to 1000. Despite this fact they are going to go ahead making trenches between the buildings. And they may remove the fences between the main street, so that in case of an air raid it would be possible to run from one side to the other. The women to our side, and vice versa.

There is no doubt that women and men would run to each other. That happens without an attack. And it can also be expected, that after nine months, there will be quite a number of illegal children born. It happens in spite of the fences.

We are attending lectures by Mendl about Marxism. They are well done. I wrote a letter today to Hacker, to the address in Switzerland, and I wrote to Lamm.

Friday, our cleaning day in the morning, at 7:30.. One has to move everything from the building and put outside beds, dresses, suitcases, simply

everything, even what hangs on the wall. And the quarters get a good scrubbing. Outside, we are dismantling the bunks and looking for bees and bed bugs. There are quite a number of them here.

At 10 am. Strawick arrives, with some English and Jewish sergeants. They inspect the building and then move everything back inside again. Then we had a bath, always on Friday. We go downstairs to where the disinfestations are, into the hot showers. We shave, and make ourselves "schabastig."

Grass does not have to be dug up today. It is a bit of a nuisance, that we have on Friday an opposite routine that is, that dinner is lunch, and lunch is dinner.

At night there is a double portion of meat. But on the other hand there is none of it on Sunday. On Saturday we have eggs, onions, and tomatoes for lunch.

The news of the battles of Crete upset me a lot. In the evening I walk outside with Pasak and Minkus till 1 a.m. Last night I slept outside. It took me long to fall asleep and in the morning I was awakened by a Kafir who told me to assemble for census at am. I hope I will sleep better tonight

24/5:

My wish was fulfilled. There was a fine chamsim blowing, perhaps till 4 am. Then, suddenly, we had a breeze from the sea, and it was cool again. I was stretched out on my bunk, and I read: Juedische Memoiren aus drei Jahrhunderten, bv Hans Bach. In the morning I had a minor argument with

Pepik Hajek because of his cards. Some of them got lost from his pack. Immediately he accused all the inmates in our hut. He said everybody is borrowing them, and therefore they got lost. He said he is not going to lend them out anymore. The whole thing was mainly directed toward me because I borrowed them quite often, to play "patience." In the end I pointed out that they had probably dropped between the wood planks of the floor, and were probably really there. I gave him a good piece of my mind; although otherwise I am quite friendly with him.

He is a terribly stingy person. Everybody in the room hates him. Rutka was also badly brought up, a sponger, and a snorer, and troubles everybody in the room. He is a liar, and his father believes everything he says. Six weeks ago, the pair had a fight with Old Mueller. They all belong to the "mishpacha" (family). They reproached each other for everything that went wrong in their families. The old man (the father) is quite a piece of a yeller. He knows everything; he was everywhere. And so, everyone is quite fed up with him. In a nutshell, a madhouse.

In the evening on May 24th we received from Dostrovskv the news that the Bulgarians (who are interned 11 months), are supposed to leave in a few days. The government has already consented to it. In honor of this there is a big celebration. We all wished them the best. I am here, 6 months today. It is incredible, that it's already 6 months, since the *Patria* sank. It seems as if it happened yesterday. The demonstrations, about which Wilson warned Wolf, did not take place. It would have been a very silly thing to do; the

situation would have become unnecessarily more involving and nothing would have been solved. The whole thing was plotted by a group of 55 (Keritchen, Kurt Stein, Luk Pollak, the singer, Stein, Pater, etc.), a bourgeois clique in opposition to Wolf.

The newspaper had better news from Crete; however, bad news about the *Hood*, the biggest English battleship (42,000 tons) was struck in the gunpowder magazine, and exploded in the air. We are expecting despite everything, to be released in the nearest future.

They will be needing this camp. Downstairs on the lawn there is some activity. Perhaps they are building some fortifications, because they expect some demonstrations.

26/5:

Jindra Fantl and his brother Fanta received some news today from home that their mother died. She took her own life when she heard of the catastrophe of the *Patria*, but the real tragedy is that they are alive and well and they lost their mother although she was never there. I feel terribly sorry for them. They are good boys. They are saying "Kaddish" for her. Rosin says the prayers.

27/5

Again, some legal immigrants arrive. Dostrovsky is here. He is once more convinced that the Bulgarians would be released by the British authorities, and that the delay was only caused by red tape. So they should be leaving within the next few days.. That would also be a good sign for us.

The political situation has improved; and things on Crete seem to be looking up again.

28/5:

Good news: The British have sunk the *Bismark*, a new German cruiser. On Crete it looks bad again; they lost a lot of soldiers there.

30/-31/5:.

Spirits seem to be high but in reality everybody is furious that we are stuck here for no reason. The rumor has it that the British are afraid of the Fifth Column. So they could not release legal immigrants, because amongst civilians there could be spies. If the Germans wanted to send someone in this way they would equip them with identification papers. Perhaps even with a certificate which would enable them to infiltrate without difficulty. Others say that we are here because of the Arabs. He is also stupid. The Arabs know that the *Patria* received amnesty, and as survivors of a shipwreck we are entitled to stay in the country. That was already published in the Palestine Post of December. The Arabs would regard us as new settlers.

Dostrovskv has told the Bulgarians. three times that they are going to be set free. Now he gives them a new deadline they should be out by the 15th of June. The Czech group should also be leaving within three weeks. Major Petr was here on the 30th of May. He told us that news. In case those two groups would be leaving, the whole transport has reason to believe that they too would be released soon.

On the other hand there is a rumor going around that the school will be getting new benches. That means we would expect to be hibernating here all winter. A teacher from Haifa, who was here on inspection said that the benches may have nothing to do with our not being released. They might get them one day, and the next day we may be released. The uncertainty is the worst part of it. We are of course afraid that the Germans might get here in case of further British defeats. Should the Czech group be released it would mean for me a very painful separation from the boys. I would be here alone; and I am sure that at the beginning I would miss them a lot. We three had pictures taken. Gottfreund took them. Bulgarian takes photos of the quarters and the group. We have already seen the photograph Gutfreund took. They are excellent. So we order four, and one we are going to send through to Trudy Lamm via Switzerland, for our mother. The food in the camp has recently gotten worse. The jam in the morning is bitter; the cottage cheese at the evening meal seems too sour. Dr. Auerbach made a purge in the kitchen, and sacked Spiegestein and a few other young boys. The coffee is bitter, and the cooks are stealing the sugar for themselves. There is a lot of business going on. Waldstein, from quarter 61 makes rissels (hamburgers); Otto Braun, chocolate balls. Allfuss on 58, makes toast. A pastry maker is in one of the buildings downstairs. Jirka Weigert cooks coffee, hamburgers, picklets (pancakes), etc. They are all making their products from stolen supplies from the kitchen. Wolf forbade Dr. Auerbach's recommendation to produce ice cream and to sell fruit.

Yesterday he prohibited the trading of all produce. It is a precaution in case typhoid might break out. The truth is that a case was discovered a fortnight ago. Over the entire period of our stay in the camp, altogether 40 people have been sick with typhoid. This is really serious. Restrictions will hardly be observed, especially since Lustig ordered a frying pan from Popper, made out of plates. The prices of all these products are quite low, in view of the fact that they are made from stolen goods. A hamburger costs 7 mls., pancakes 5 mls., chocolates and sweets, 2-5 mls., pancakes, 5 mls., two pieces of toast for 3 mls., doughnuts for 5 mls., 4 dumplings filled with corned beef, 10 mls.

My brothers and I are looking well. I have even put on weight, which is a bit disgusting because we have been getting quite a bit of halva. And also I have very little physical exercise.

1/6:

The newspapers are reporting successes in Iraq and of the end of the insurrection. However, the late news announced the fall of Crete. This was indeed a terrible blow for us. We had hoped they would have held out longer there. In the afternoon the "bonke" spread, that the Germans were landing their military forces in Syria. Thank God they proved to be untrue. The most conflicting rumors are being spread all over camp. And everyone of us should, according to his own clever judgment, be an important official in some government. There are 2000 of us, and 2000 different opinions. Ganz pronounced yesterday that in his opinion India would fall. Stamder is all

green with fright; also Fatty on 51 is possessed by his own wild imagination, and gets carried away.

I am thinking now about my own political convictions. I ask myself whether they were or are right, and I believe I have done nothing which I would regret. My Jewish point of view in relation to Eretz is that Zionism is quite positive and I am convinced that the Jewish question can be solved in a national sense, on a free Jewish territory where Jews will have the opportunity to settle, regardless of whoever would win the war. The negative solution: the assimilation of Jews, would be after this war, most improbable. In my opinion there could be a Jewish state anywhere as long as the climatic conditions and the country would be able to accept masses of people, who would be able to make a living. The circumstances would have to be suitable for the establishment of a new state. In our relationship to Palestine there is a lot of sentimentality. We would like to live in a country that was promised to us, although we are atheists, but I do not know if the obstacles which we have to encounter are not insurmountable. We need in the first place land, a territory not an asylum, but a home. The whole Jewish question would be naturally best solved by world revolution. As a good, I wish of course for such a change. Unfortunately I don't know if it's going to happen and I honestly doubt it.

2/6

We read today in the newspapers that Dr. Wolf and Mr. Bernstein, two legal immigrants who were here with us, were put on trial because they had

faked foreign passports. Dr. Wolf was a citizen of Czechoslovakia, Bernstein had German citizenship and in Rumania they bought themselves Polish Passports with which they succeeded in getting into the country. In consideration of their tragic pilgrimage they were acquitted. However, they were asked to deposit 40 LP as a guarantee that their conduct would improve. The minyan meetings for the Fantls to say kaddish, which were held twice a day, are no longer attended by the kosher Jews. They wanted from us a guarantee that we would not smoke in the cribs on Saturday. They exploit every occasion for their religious fanaticism and they are just as intolerant as other religions. Thank God they represent only a minority and we don't give up and we are fighting back.

The Czech group started today again with their drill, since they are certain it won't be long before they are released.

3/6

A liberation committee "Befreiungskomitee" was formed in the camp. It is directed against Wolf, and it was represented by the people from 55. The former manager of Luetzey, Mr. Popper, would like to become the commander of the camp. They (55) let their beards grow as a sign of protest, and they are organizing meetings. They are looking for some chaps who would demonstrate on their behalf, because they themselves are cowards. It's true that Popper is quite a good, clever and intelligent man, but a nut, who makes out of everything a big thing. He wants to organize everything and in the end makes nothing but a big mess. In the evening they met outside No.

53 and after an hour of useless discussion they separated again.

I walked a long time with Jindra Fantl and Jindra Polak and after that with some other people. Fantl told me of various intrigues in the camp, of Wolf's inefficiency and of other gossips. After that a man told me quite interesting things about the conditions in the Czech group. Karel Roubicek has support from Emil Gruenhut and plots against Heller. Besides they are going to enlist in the army only those officers who speak Czech fluently and who are older than 40 years. Therefore Kuehn, Porges, Herzog, Stampfer, Torsch, Wiener won't be accepted, but they are going to be maintained by consulates or they would eventually get incorporated into so called troops made up of officers where they would get a pay of 15 LR. However, the pay in ordinary sections of the army is much higher. Something rather unpleasant happened to Dr. Blau. "Betar" is not behind him. They say he is a homosexual and that he received from outside a hint not to lecture, and for that reason he announced that he would finish all classes and lectures and that he was resigning from all functions.

This morning the Befreiungskomitee had a meeting again. And then there is another "bonke" going around. Dr. Auerbach put in his resignation or applied for a transfer, because he is no longer in a position to guarantee the health conditions in the camp. There is typhoid, epilepsy and all sorts of other things.

Yesterday a commission came and inspected the kitchen. The food is really worse. On Sunday Hoskins had a meeting with the supervisors of the

crifs, and it turned out to be a fiasco. Lilinka Hiemanova Steinova and the singer Steinova made a speech and there were so many people talking on the top of each other that no conclusion was reached. Everybody in the camp has crazy ideas. Everybody slowly turns into a nut. The transport, the catastrophe, Atlit, the political situation, all this is a bit too much even for somebody with good nerves, and the majority have not got them. The only person with whom one can still talk is Mendl. Pacek is good and clever and if he does not get upset it is still possible to carry on a reasonable discussion with him. Sometimes he too acts strangely, especially when he hears some bad news.

Last night Mendl told me during a lecture that the Bulgarians are most likely to leave the camp soon. It seems to be official.

I walked that night with Chamlain and we discussed how important it would be that Esperanto was taught in every school all over the world.

5/6

It appears from the latest news that the English are intending to occupy Syria unless the Germans get in before them.

Last night we had instead of the usual sour cottage cheese a very good goat cheese, similar to our Liptauer cheese and for breakfast we had a good apricot jam. It seems that there is some effort being made in the kitchen for improvement. And tonight they even gave us some sour milk.

Mendl told me today a lot about the affair Blau, why he resigned from a leading function in the Revisionist party here in the camp. Blau wrote an

English letter to inspector Wilson . Popper wrote it for him. In it he complained about the people in the camp. He wrote that there were irresponsible elements among us, etc. In short, a letter of an informer. By chance this letter got into the hands of Wolf, who showed it to Mendl, who copied it three times, and sent one copy to Sochunter, who placed the whole matter into the hands of the Revisionists outside. These gave the party orders to expel Blau.

Nobody was prepared to get involved. However after we finished classes, Dr Erich Steiner decided to do something about it. He informed Blau about it. The latter defended himself and had no intentions to resign. He did so only when somebody proclaimed during the evening lectures that "Dr. Blau is a criminal." His successor, Steiner, became the chairman of the N.Z.O. He is a very decent man and I am sure he will get cooperation.

In the quarters factions were forming for and against Blau (that sort of situation prevailed already on the *Milos*) and apparently they reproached one another on who was homosexual and who not. Blau is without doubt a clever and highly educated man. I knew that he had certain character defects, but that he was such a wretch of a fellow I did not know, and I would have never believed he would be able to become a quisling. He would be certainly the first if the Germans would get here.

6/6

Today we had some wonderful news. We received from Epler a letter where he wrote that upon receipt of our letter he had cabled immediately to

our mother and he translated his answer into English. Mother writes that they were worried about us, but they were glad that we reached our destination safely. They themselves are well. Also our relatives and friends sent their regards too. We are indeed very happy that we got this letter. It is the first concrete news from home and we felt enormous relief.

The Czechoslovak military forces have now some training in the morning, then from 8 to 9 theory, and in the evening, from 6-7 fitness exercises in the bunks. The leaders, it seems, enjoy giving orders. They are lucky that the unit is composed mainly of Freshmen. Older soldiers would not stand such childish antics. The officers are doing with Emil Gruenhut what they want. He is a weakling and easily influenced. He always shares the opinion of the one with whom he speaks last. They believe that they will be discharged in 2 weeks, I don't think it will be before all the Bulgarians will be released and they, despite all the promises made, are sitting still here. I am only surprised that my brothers are also so silly, otherwise they are quite clever boys. It amazes me that they can take part in such a circus. These autocrats are threatening them, especially those who were expelled from the group, as if Mr. X, who did not turn up at their half hour training in the morning, went to fight for the sake of Mr. Y. who ordered him to . It is a shame that between men who join the army for the good of their country and people, threats of a similar nature are being used. And those who obey are really afraid of punishment and don't realize that it was neither Mr. Gruenhut or Mr. Roubicek who enlisted them but the Czechoslovakian Foreign Army. I am

really glad that I did not join up, because the way they are carrying on is beyond any words. Personal interests are their first concern as everywhere else.

7/6

This morning at about 7 am, it started to rain heavily. In this season it is quite rare. It rained about 10 minutes and then it cleared completely.

8/6

Today at last came the official release. The first of the Bulgarians from *Libertad*. Tomorrow there will be 77 leaving. Amongst them will also be old Brod with his daughter. The English conditions are such that in the register of those who should be discharged are ten people who have already left, and were given official consent to their release because they were sick. This was a terrible blow for the ambitions of the Befreiungskomite. They were demonstrating yesterday and marched under the leadership of Walter Bach and another from the *Pacific*, Dr. Neumann and Dr. Wunderlich. It is true that Wunderlich is a great scholar and a great historian, but he is very senile and it gives him pleasure to be part of a delegation ("kovet"). Today it was Wilson who called some of them. He told them off, announced that they would have to stay here longer than the others and that he will lock them up. They were shocked, besides they are cowards like all the bourgeois and I think that this movement is now finished. A lot of them realize that the Bulgarians are leaving after all and that all demonstrations are useless.

In the morning we heard that the British were beginning to occupy

Syria. In the afternoon the noise of cannons could be heard, and then bombarding, and the news in the evening confirmed the morning news. Perhaps they are going to succeed after all.

Freimuth received a letter via Sweden today and in it there were copies of legal documents issued on the 30th of April of this year. They passed the censorship without any trouble.

9/6:

The Bulgarians have left today, 77 people, and there are still 170 who have remained in the camp. We are told that the rest would be released at the end of this week. The political news is rather conflicting. The English it is believed, are standing 20 miles in front of Damascus.

10/6:

Last night from midnight to 5 am there was an air raid in Haifa. Almost all inmates were outside watching it. They did not wake me up. We don't know yet the extent of the damage, but already at 9:00 a.m. we heard that there were 5 dead. But the official news has not come as yet. Old Mueller said this morning that during the bombardment he heard big detonations. This reminds me of what Cimala said during the first English classes given by Pacek. Pacek asks to translate the sentence "The Lady sings a song" into Czech. Cimala translates. Another exercise is to translate this sentence into the passive. Cimala is unable to cope. Pasak advises him to turn this sentence first around into Czech (The song is sung by the lady). Cimala asks, "Who is here suffering?"

One Bulqarian died in the afternoon, he was only 21 years old. He should have been released also, but 14 days ago he came down with typhoid. Again, after four months, another case of typhoid.

11/6.

Approximately at 11:00 p.m. when I was just going to bed, I heard sea planes. We went outside. We could not see the planes of course, in the night. But we could hear that they were heading north. When they flew across Haifa, the flag was shooting at them. The reflections of the salvos and the explosions were clearly seen. For awhile it was rumbling and after about 8 shots the red racket stopped firing. They did not drop any bombs. We expected them to come once more in the middle of the night, but it was quiet. The shooting from the flag is being heard frequently even during the day, when the plane cannot be seen or heard, and the clouds of explosions are also visible.

Yesterday afternoon there was heavy shooting on Mt. Carmel and some people claimed that they had seen the raid. The plane (the majority of us did not see or hear it) flew apparently to the east leaving a smoke-trail behind it.

In the morning from 10 o'clock to noon, I had to work near the hospital to carry more patients inside. At 10:30 a.m. the funeral of the second person who died of typhoid took place. The chevra (community) most probably from Haifa came with a truck. His friends put him inside with a wreath made of barbed wire, enlaced with some flowers. Many people cried. Perhaps there

are not many fatalities like this one. However, the tragedy of it bears heavily on our own desperate situation.

12/6

At about 3 a.m. I was awakened. There was an air raid. This time it was much bigger than the one we had yesterday. It lasted more than an hour, They dropped ten bombs, the explosion of which could be easily distinguished from cannon shots because of the glare and detonation. Two artillery grenades exploded near the camp. We could hear it clearly. Later there were big detonations, the vibrations of which, were felt distinctly. During the day we found out that two houses were destroyed in Haifa, also affected was the railway track, the road and a street, two deaths and some injured. The evening newspapers announced that Tel-Aviv was also bombarded, however with little effect. The advance in Syria is very slow. Beirut and Damascus are not yet occupied. Tomorrow the new brick cribs will be filled with 750 people from Aka. It is a transport which arrived in Haifa 2 weeks ago.

13/6

Of the people of Aka, in the meantime, about 240 women, came at 11 a.m. in the morning. The new cribs were not opened, but they accommodated the people in the empty cribs near the store. In the afternoon more cribs were vacated on our and the women's side. 132 Bulgarians from the *Libertad* were released today. Only 44 of them are still in the camp, and they are scheduled for discharge at the beginning of next week.

At approximately 4 o'clock Major Petr is expected here. He asked for Gruenhut and his staff. Then he asked for several people from the Czech Group. He cross-examined them and told them that next week or the week after they will be definitely released. They say that they have all the equipment for them ready. The wives and children will accompany them. This time it looks serious.

The expectations of the other people also are high, but the political situation in Syria is not altogether too good. I myself do not feel too good. It means that there will be a separation from my brothers. It was after all a good day, considering it was the thirteenth and a Friday.

14/6:

There was another air raid on Haifa today. I did not see anything. I slept. They bombarded Tel Aviv too. In the morning there was a meeting of the supervisors of the rooms with Wolf. We should have moved tomorrow on the other side, because about 500 to 600 men from Aka are expected. Since there are more cases of typhoid on the women's side, Dr. Sazl started intervening and without the permission of Dr. Misrachi (the successor of Dr. Auerbach), who is on leave, as well as disregarding Stradwick. He telephoned Dostravsky. The latter arrived regardless of the fact that it was the Sabbath, and he arranged that a medical commission would be sent here from Jerusalem, and that we would stay on our side until they arrive. Kornfeld reported on the meeting about the air raid and the necessity of anti air raid defense, which is going to be a set up. A "Luftschutzingenieur" from

Haifa will arrive. He will arrange the digging of trenches. All men between 18- 35 will be called up for digging and also fire-engines,. Ambulances will be drawn in as well. Special guards will be recruited.

The Czech Group is preparing for an early release. The boys are stupidly selling very cheaply, and give away their belongings because they are not allowed to take much with them. I found out from the organizers that they have allocated to the unit only 5 to 7 officers, and it is possible that Wiener, the old Porges, Torsch, Stamfer, Herzog and Novak and perhaps still others, are going to stay. They themselves have not the slightest idea that this could happen to them, and when they find out it will be awful for them. Old Porges will be losing his son Honza, and the old man, the greatest troublemaker that concerns Wolf, as well as the kosher people, the Zionists and the rest of the people of the camp, and he who is looking forward so much to get out of here, will remain. Perhaps there is in all this some kind of justice and perhaps also something comical. But it is a tragedy, and actually pretty nasty, and mean, that they don't tell about it. Heller too does not realize that they may not recognize his rank outside, he who involved himself from the very beginning with the Czech Group most. Pacek may be hit by the same fate, but it won't hit him so hard because he was expecting it.

Scherzer was not accepted after the first World War as Austrian captain in the Czechoslovakian Army and he will have to serve as an ordinary soldier. The ones with matriculation are going for training into an officer's school in Egypt. This group will leave one week after they are getting

equipped here in the country.

The discussions in the camp are mostly revolving around the political situation. It's quiet, the situation in the Near East is good and one is waiting for what the Germans are going to do next. Will they attack Turkey, Spain, England (an invasion)? Nobody knows. Rumania mobilized and the Germans are concentrating their forces on the Russian border. One reckons that they will most likely attack Turkey and that they are afraid of Russian intervention.

15/6

A bonke went round that the remaining Bulgarians ought to be released and with them 70 people, the old ones and sick ones from the *Patria*. And after half an hour it turned out that the bonke was only partly true. The Bulgarians are still here. However, in their place, 80 people from the *Patria* were discharged this morning. It goes according to the alphabet, the age, under 18 years, and the older ones, over 45 years. And immediately another list was published of people due to leave the next day. There should be 82 of them. It is wonderful, and nobody can imagine the joy, and the new rumors circulating. It just cannot be described. Today old Kohn left, Mrs. Bernat with children, Erisek Brodavsko and many others..

For the Czech Group this is to some extent a fiasco for the "Befreiungskomitee." These again did a very stupid thing. They wrote to Sochnut, that they should make a statement of all the gifts, which they had

donated on the *Patria*. This is terribly impertinent and in the evening I almost had a quarrel with Pavel about it, who said that they were entitled to it. Pavel, (whenever it concerns Eretz) takes the opportunity to give expression to his crushing criticism of Eretz, and at the same time he is stupid, which is beyond understanding. He is quite clever and intelligent, but because of the conditions in the camp, he dropped to the level of those bourgeois, shop boys and drugstore keepers from No.55. Like every youngster he wants by all means to apply his crushing criticism, and this is usually formulated in such a way as the opinion of Rudolf Smetana, a public speaker in the pub at Pribram, besides a member of the tradesman party of the middle-class, an expert on taxes and state revenue.

I sold 1 pair of shoes for 300 mlils. I got them from the JAL from Yuqoslavia. I sold also 1 blanket from the tent, the one from Brno which was a bit sticky, for 130 Mils. Honza bought an English dictionary for 100 Mils. I wrote and they wrote too on 6 pages of writing paper bianco greetings to the address at home, so that we could write home all three, in the absence of one or the other of us.

16,17,18/6

Every day there are about 80 people leaving the camp. Wilson was given a list of 444 people. It includes also those who left already, between the age of 18 to 50 years who are released by the C.I.D. The Government released the *Patria* (whole), and the C.I.D. releases them gradually after investigation. There are 30 Bulgarians who are still here. Yesterday the first

ones from the Czech Group left. Hermanek (Walter Hermann) and Rutka Hajkova. The first one is 17 years old, Rutka only nine. A car was driving UD for them from the consulate and they took Hermanek into A.R.C. (Army Reception Camp) and Rutka into the flat of the major, who rang Gruenhut in the afternoon and told him that Rutka is just having a bath. Captain Porques is supposed to go today. It only confirms what I have been writing about these officers before. Then his wife and they both should be contacting the consulate. With them will be going little Basil, Risa Roubicek, Stepan Polak and Jindra Polak should have gone too. The latter, however, on order of Major Petr has to stay, and is supposed to leave with the whole group. Business is again thriving with all sorts of things, blankets, sleeping bags, boots, shoes, underwear, clothing, etc. The Czech Group is selling what they have, because they are going to be equipped with everything they need.

We three, Honza, Pavel and I divided our possessions. They took for themselves only two shirts, ten handkerchiefs, 4 towels, ten pairs of socks etc. One expects that the CID is going to release more of us and that we will be all be set free by the end of June.

I forgot that we received on the 17/6 another letter from home, through Eppler and in it there was a letter from mother, Francka, Zdenka and Anickain, in their very own handwriting. Mother writes that they are living in the old Dlace. They have sublet one room to two girls. She writes that Halia and Ervin are very nice to them, that means that he is still working and earning money. Further she writes that Heinrich Biealer died (in

Buchenwald), that they are missing us terribly, etc. We wrote to America the day before yesterday by airmail. Petr Mayer joined us and paid $\frac{1}{4}$ of the postage. I don't know if this letter is going to reach them, because the political situation does not look too good. One expects that America will enter the war.

19/6:

Old Porges with his wife left yesterday. His son remained here. Also Skutetzky from room 58 left this morning. We called him the "Kohlenbaron." Everybody makes fun of the Czech Group because they are still here, and it seems that they are going to release them individually according to age. In the afternoon we heard some surprising news that ingenieur Arnost Winternitz will be leaving with his wife. He is only 41 years old. Either he is extremely lucky or he knows somebody influential. But I think the first one is more likely.

20./6:

Winternitz really left today. What luck. Hajek from room 51 told me today, that the major succeeded in getting for the Czech group a postponement of another week. They are expecting him today at 3:30 p.m. and he most likely will take Jindra Polak with him. Waldmannova left also with Lee. Her husband remained here. Wolf is making through Wilson, a special request that the members of separated families should be released in the first place. The English are indeed amazing. They released for instance a child and instead of releasing the mother, they released spinster

X who happened to have the same surname, and the real mother was left here. There are many similar cases. Stepan Polak was released with a 30 year old, young unmarried woman Eli Polak, and Mrs. Polak is still here. And that is the reason Wolf is intervening. We are waiting with suspense to see whether there will be another call up on Sunday or whether the release of people will suddenly come to a stop.

This afternoon an official announcement came, that Monday they will be continuing with the release of more people. We are told that 80 should be leaving next week, all passengers from the *Patria*. Altogether there are about 1100 people from the *Patria* here, 30 from the *Libertad*, about 250 women from the *Dorian* (Aka) and some legal Polish immigrants, who arrived here on military visas and now they don't want to join the Polish army. They say they want to join the Jewish Army. Stradwick apparently told Poubicek a "bonke" that within 14 days the camp must be vacated. Major Petr came here really at 3:30 p.m. and brought with him Rutka as a visitor, who in the meantime stays with him and has a good time. She is touring the country with him. She spent two days in Jerusalem with him, and is herself very charming. Although she has taken with her quite a bit of belongings, they brought her new things. They gave us an account of Hermanek's military service as an ordinary soldier and apparently he absorbed it well.

The Czech group had to experience another disappointment because they are going to be released gradually with the others. Major Petr took Jindra Polak with him. He should have left on Wednesday.

God in Heaven has quite a sense of humor, that he has this group dangling for a while. During the last seven months they have done nothing but boast "we are the reliable ones, we are going to be released first, you others you are going to stay, etc."

The officers Porques, Kuehn, Wiener, Stampfer, Herzog and Novak have not been accepted in the army, because they are 40 years old. The other news which I wrote on the 14/6. are correct. However it is going to be Torsch's and Rott's turn. Pacek was given the word of honor by Karel Roubicek that he will be joining up with the army. Yet he fears still some letdown on their behalf. Mendl Juqbeer is playing a major part on the release of the children . He decides whether they are compatible and who is going to be separated from the parents, in case the latter have a bad influence on them. This happened in the case of the children of Bernats because of her. He himself is a very decent fellow and also very educated. The parents receive 6LP monthly for the children , quite a bit of money.

The political news is rather bad. In Syria things are not going too good. Some Frenchmen have penetrated as far as Palestine to Metoul. On the Russian borders there is a lot of suspense and uncertainty. There is no doubt that sooner or later something is bound to happen.

21/6

The gentlemen officers who were not accepted already came to terms with their fate. There will be another blow for them, namely the so-called "S" which means social security payments from the Czechoslovak Consulate in

the amount of 6LP monthly. As I was told they won't be getting it. Apparently it does not even exist only in the best case, for some active officers. If this takes place it would be the last straw. Those people have sold many of their belongings, because they believed they would be definitely accepted. They were pulling their leg for seven months and told them the truth only at the last moment. I myself can hardly believe it, and I think it is a lie, that they will be getting some maintenance after all. On room 51 there is apparently a secret member of the group called Fischer. It is interesting that he knows about the Czech group sooner than they know it themselves. They are supposed to get the news from Czuzcka from HOC.

21/6

The first thing which made us cheer up again was the news that the USSR has finally entered the war, now that the Germans had attacked them. It may be somewhat premature from the military diplomatic point of view, but for us these news are like a balm on searing wounds. The camp is full of speculations and talks. We are thinking of what sort of effect this news will have on our loved ones at home. The Russians already warded off the Rumanian attack on the Prut.

The continuation of the discharge of more people was disrupted today. They released only those who were supposed to leave a week ago and because of some illness, they were detained longer. A part of the people from room 51 claim that there is already another list. Others deny this news.

The camp is again full of "bonkes". In the afternoon approximately 15 legal immigrants arrived who came through Japan and India. A part of them were Polish and then came Jews from Buchara, some real exotics. Indeed the wife of one immigrant, a woman of about 55 years old, looked quite exotic in her turban and long white robe . She looked like a fortune teller who could read from the palms of hands. The evening news brought the bombardment of Kiev, the advance of the Rumanians across the Prut and the counter-attack against the Russians in East Germany

25/6:

Further release has been evidently stopped for a few days. Many rumors are being circulated around the camp, and it is wiser not to take too much notice of them.

From the Russian front the news is rather good. The Russians are said to have destroyed a lot of planes yesterday (52), and 300 tanks, and they took 5000 Prisoners. The English occupied Damascus at last and they are penetrating further. The fate of the USSR is very much on our mind. Perhaps the Red Army will turn out as efficient as we think her to be.

This afternoon a snake, about a meter long (perhaps a sand snake) was caught. In front of No. 60 ants were swarming from a nest when the snake, evidently because of the migration of ants appeared, and then disappeared in one of the crifs, where it was caught and burnt with a lamp.

26-29/6:

The boys who worked in the store went on strike today, because of

Rob Mueller. The latter had no permission from the kafir to leave the camp at 6 o'clock to get to the store. He squeezed himself through the barbed wire near the hospital and was caught by Stradwick who gave orders to lock him in the guardroom. Rob was released at lunch time, but the others refused to go into the store. Stradwick wanted to force them. He told them that they are soldiers and that they have to obey orders. He then rang the major who sent the lieutenant with the long beard, but it was impossible to settle the whole matter. The Czech group were today abusing the English quite a bit. This gave me some satisfaction when I think what a cult they had previously made of them. Since he has neither been accepted in the army nor made eligible for a social security maintenance Captain Porges was at Sochnut, where they were not too anxious to meet his wishes.

This is what the Major Petr told Honza and Hajek yesterday, when he visited us in our quarters, of course. The result was that everyone was extremely upset. Didn't I write already that God in Heaven has a good sense of humor? More I would not like to write about it.

Today the 27th, we had a visit from Jindra Polak, who came with Hermann. Honza and I spoke with them. They have a good time and look well. They have not yet received their proper uniforms, they are wearing all sorts of things. They are getting ILP weekly, 10 cigarettes a day and very good food.

Tomorrow 21 Bulgarians are going to be released. Otherwise everything is at a standstill.

The news from the Russian front is good. Today we hear 4000 tanks are involved in the battle on the Polish border.

Today I went on Mendl's advice to Dr. Josefstool who was sent from the country to us as a teacher for children and who also talks with individuals about their careers and their abilities to be incorporated in the working force. He promised me that he will do his best to get me a job in my field. He asked me if I would be prepared, in case of such employment would materialize, to work in the country. I told him that in such a case I would prefer to work as a laborer on the road. Hajek told me last night that they had given me good references.

30/6:

These Bulgarians were really released and there are now no more than 25 remaining still in the camp, and they will be most likely discharged soon.

July 1-July 3

A sand fly fever has broken out in the camp. The disease is being transmitted by sand flies. In our room there are 8 cases. Last night I received a visit from Karel Roubicek, who told me that the Czech consulate was looking for their wartime industry for textile technicians, the conditions being such that one could be posted outside of Palestine. He asked me to put in an application. In the evening I sat down to make a draft. Tomorrow I shall have it written and send it.

Later, after listening to good news from the Russian front, I went for a

walk with Honza and Pavel on the assembly square. There was a nice concert on with guitar playing and concertinas. An English policeman threw cigarettes and 100 Mills over the fence to the performers. And at 11:00 p.m. there was still another concert. To our amazement planes were flying above us and the flag and cannons were starting a barrage of fire. It was quite a nice sight to observe the sparks of the shots behind Mt. Carmel, and then on the sky the explosions from the grenades and in between stripes blue-red lights of the lit up ammunition, which looked like corals on a necklace and then half a minute later the blow. The pilots threw about three bombs, but then the anti-air raid defense on the ground succeeded to shoot one plane down. Like a giant fire-ball in a sea of sparks and flaring red, the burning plane fell slowly to the ground. Near the ground it flared up again and in the reflection one could see how some object, either a part of the plane, or the pilot with his parachute descended slowly and disappeared altogether. The sight was pretty, almost similar to a night in Venice with firecrackers, but those in the air and those on the ground experienced another thing. The green rocket ceased the barrage.

Yesterday the consul, Glasr was here also, because of old Porges. The story came out why the Sochnut does not do anything for him. Porges immediately started a quarrel in Beth Olim. He used anti semitic insults and they simply threw him out and were quite justified in doing so. In Haifa he walked in a Czech cap and caused a lot of unpleasantness to the Czech Consulate. The consul had to smooth the matter out, and yesterday he came

to tell the leaders of the Czech group that although some officers have not been accepted for military service, they have to behave properly. They are not eligible to wear the army cap. They have to hand it in as soon as they are released from the camp and give it to Emil, and further that the children from this group have to attend Jewish schools. For me it was for the third time, a kind of satisfaction. My brothers and the group were walking with their tails between their legs and keeping their mouths shut.

.Tomorrow on the 4th, Honza and I have a birthday. I am going to be 32, Honza 26.

4/7: We got a real drubbing, were shaved, watered down. I poured Paca on Honza. Our loved ones at home have remembered us a lot, and we are thinking of them too.

5/7-7/7

Major Scott, the official in charge of all prisons in the country, was here, inspected the camp and promised he would intervene on our behalf in Jerusalem with one condition that we would all behave well (as school children). Last week the crifs showed the following inscriptions: "The camp is for Nazis, but not for Jews. We want freedom." etc; etc;

Because of all this Stradwick forbade all visits. Anyway hardly anybody comes here. Today there were only 5 people. In response, the following was written again on the crifs, "Instead of visits we want freedom." They intervened with Scott to again allow us visitors, and he gave permission, except for Sundays. We were told that he was intervening on

our behalf in Jerusalem. Today ten people were released, nine from the *Libertad*, one from the *Patria*. There are only 16 people from the *Libertad* left in the camp.

The news from the front was good. The Russians have a strong defense built up. The Germans admit great losses and slow advance. In Syria there is some headway, but it is surprising how long it takes. The English are bombarding a lot; Posen and German and French ports. In view of the discontinuation of releasing further people the mood in the camp is very low. Some of them would like to demonstrate, but that would make things worse, and most probably it would extend our stay here.

8-10/7

The political news from Russia is the same, that means good, and in Syria, General Deuz requested an armistice. During the night from the 7th to the 8th there was a big air raid on Haifa which lasted three hours. An oil refinery depot was hit, one tank and some house and by some strange coincidence, a German school. We saw the flag, a luminous ammunition from the cannon, the explosion and denotation. This time it was wild. I wish I had a tenth of what it cost in silver .

Last night Pavel got sick. He suffers most likely from sand fly fever. Today his temperature is up to 39.6 but fortunately it is not dangerous. It lasts three days and it is over. Today it is also an anniversary in our camp. We said Kaddish and we lit up lights on room 56. We are only allowed to have

light there.

They released again today 2 men from the *Libertad*, and one woman from the *Patria*. In the last few days a special tension has been between us and the English. The English are angry because of the matter of Jirka Boehm. He was working as a waiter for the English, and apparently Hoskins told Boehm he did not like to be attended by a Jew. Boehm reported this to Wilson, Hoskins denied it etc. and all others left the English and now they are forced to employ salaried people from outside. They are now stricter about the grass plucking. It has to be done properly. Markmann held a speech about it.

Today a lot of mail arrived through the Red Cross. Pacek, Dr. Brod, Petr Mayer, about 200 people received some. We, nothing.

11-19/7

The discharging of people has stopped completely. Only the old Mueller from our crif was taken to the Government Hospital in Haifa and from there he will be probably released. The conditions in the camp are worsening, although the food is somewhat improving. The state of health is generally bad. To sand-fly fever and typhoid, has been added malaria, diphtheria and scarlet fever. We have a shortage of soap and toilet paper, but with a little bit of good will it could easily be remedied.

On Tuesday at 5 p.m. there is a small celebration for Herzl, at which occasion Josefstaal gives a very good speech. On Thursday night a meeting was held of all supervisors of blocks and quarters with Wolf and Josefstaal.

The camp is preparing a hunger strike to achieve the continuation of the release of inmates. Josefstaall is against it. I listened near the window. He speaks beautifully mainly about the political situation in the country.

He says that a hunger strike is an effective weapon, but we should not commence anything before getting instructions from outside, the Yishuv. He does not convince me. I think an effective hunger strike would help a lot considering the bad health conditions we have here now.

Some intrigue is going on against Wolf, and today he resigned. He tells Wilson that he does it because of health reasons. They appointed Kolmann from Prague as his successor. They also will have to elect new block supervisors. The general mood in the camp is very precarious and I think that something is going to happen soon.

The political situation is good. Syria is liquidated, and on the Russian Front everything is going ahead well.

24/7-26/7 sandfly fever

-30/7 in bed,-lazy, and lolling about.

From 29/7-30/7

I have not written for several reasons. I suffered from sand fly fever and besides I had no money for an exercise book. Jindra Pantl to whom I lent my pen damaged the nib of it. Gutfreund managed to sharpen it in such a way that at least I am able to use it again. During the month of July nothing happened, except that the meals had been improving thanks to Dr. Josefstaalls' efforts. We are getting sausages twice a week. After the sand

fly fever subsided I was on a special diet and the following week I received additional rationing from WIZO.

From the beginning of August I have been working. Honza and Paul are working in the kitchen. I am not getting much out of the type of work I am doing . There is now quite a tension between me and the others. They are angry with me and I don't know why. Nevertheless this does not worry me a bit..

Josefstaal had some news on the 15th of August. The High Commiissioner intends to release the people from the *Patria*. He handed the whole matter over to the C.I.D. Yesterday the committee investigated each individual case and inquired about a sponsor who lives in the country. They were dealing with 250 people. They gave preference to children and broken up marriages. These may be discharged tomorrow.

This time it looks serious. Everyday there may be 50 people leaving which would mean that we could be all free in a month time. I am quite friendly with Zeise. It would be good if we could make some deal together. However there is no capital with which to start.

One could say that any change here can be interpreted that people are going to be set free. A week ago school was starting again and the canteen was taken over by the camp. And immediately after these changes something happened.

25/8

Downstairs in the disinfection room some new activity is taking place.

Those people with sponsors are being registered. Unfortunately I have no sponsor myself. Up till now nobody was discharged yet and it will take another day or so. But there is no doubt that things are moving. It is very unlikely that anybody would go to Bet Olim. It could happen that they will issue identification cards, as well as money, and transport people to their destinations. Yesterday some medicos who came from outside gave me a medical insurance card.

Yesterday I was allowed to go swimming. The permission came from Major Scott who ordered twice a day bathing for 20 people (20 women in the morning and 20 men in the afternoon), and Wilson increased this number to 55 people(110 daily). The Czech group is acting as guards, 4 of them at a time. An Englishman with a revolver accompanies them with 2 kafirs

The walk to the sea is very pleasant. It takes about 30 minutes to get there and as soon as the gates of the camp are behind us, it seems that everything without the barbed wire is so different. The way leads down an alley with palm trees in the direction of the village Atlit. After that one turns to the right down to the coast where several caravans of camels are carrying sand for construction work, and along the coast the way leads around the ruins of a castle from the times of the crusaders. The beach is in a bay behind these ruins. The beach is magnificent. The sand as fine as flour and the sea beautiful.

The castle looks very romantic. It encircles a small Arab village and seems to have a well preserved hall of the knights, stables and a prison. Not

far away there is a pretty building in Moorish style which houses a museum with excavations. The Arab women walk around with earthen jugs on their heads or ride on donkeys with their children. On the wall of the ruins sits an Arab gazing at the sea as wave after wave touches the shore.

We returned to the camp in the afternoon. I should have gone again today. Unfortunately it was not possible since I had on my bottom something which I thought was an ulcer, but which Dr. Saxl diagnosed as piles. Dr. Saxl brought me now two suppositories and told me if it should not go away that Dr. Auerbach will have to remove it surgically.

In the storeroom there is a big upheaval. The belongings of the people from the Mauritius were loaded there and somebody has stolen some bags. The suspicion fell on B. but it cannot be proved. Also tools in the amount of 1000 L.P. were missing.

28/8

I am now alone since the Czech group was released and with them Honza and Pavel. They were told about their discharge the day before yesterday.

On August 28th in the afternoon Gruenhut came from downstairs with the news that they would leave on the 27th, and in the evening the call-up came, 78 men, four women, and one child. On the list are also those who resigned from the group such as Fleischer, Sachs, and Placek. But the officers over 40 years old were not accepted, such as Kupa, Novak, Herzog, Stampfer, Torsch, and Rott. Yesterday morning the boys were handing in

their things and in the afternoon after 2 p.m. they left. The parting with Honza and Pavel was very difficult. It's always harder to part when one is not at home. We were all crying.

And I cried also for those men who were leaving, whom I got used to in these 9 months. I have been fond of all of them. With them parted a piece of home, a piece of Bohemia too, no matter what they were like.

We moved into No. 60, I, Polak, Amber, Freimuth, grandad Mueller, Parnes, Torsch, Stampfer and those who were left over from No.61. My bunk is at the fourth window between Amler and Freimuth. It's terrible for me to be without Honza and Pavel. It is true there is no mess in my bunk, but I would prefer their untidiness, if only they were still with me.

I asked Gruenhut if he would give me a reference in case I would want to join the army. He promised he would do his best. I am also missing Pacak and Cimml a lot. They left me a lot of their clothing and I really don't know how I shall be able to manage with so much luggage, in case I would have to leave too. This afternoon a military commission arrived. The conditions are as follows:

1. Men between the age of 19-31 for the infantry and only for Palestine, 58 piasters weekly (most interest is in the recruiting of those)
- 2.) Drivers between the age of 19-40 for the same salary, recruitable everywhere
- 3.) Experts (blacksmiths, carpenters, with a higher wage) and also recruitable everywhere necessary.

I am not considering any of these. If I should go I would rather join the Czech army.

Last night I was walking with Freimuth and Peter. I seem to be getting on well with them in spite of my being 10 years older. The company here in the crif is quite prolific. Gentlemen of Brno, Mr. Stransky, etc.. The room commandant is Herzog, quite a star.

2/9/41

Today it is a year since we left Prague. And during this one year we have gone through more than in any previous 10 years. Today's anniversary is celebrated by many. Others are , however complaining that they should have stayed at home. I am glad I made this decision and left. I have got used to the barrack No.60.

I had some tonsillitis on Friday. I felt my throat was somewhat rough. Today it is better. I don't cough so much after the treatment with codeine.

Rosin and Klein were here on Friday by the way, in uniforms, but they were not allowed to come in. Many soldiers came on Sunday. However Honza and Pavel did not come. Instead they sent me a letter. They spoke with Lamm, who promised he would give me a reference and I was told that he had a job for me in a factory, where there were 500 people. My brothers are fine. They were not issued uniforms yet. Those who visited the camp borrowed some uniforms from the Poles.

I talked to Karl Steiner, who came in civilian clothes. I wrote my brothers a letter and sent it through Mendl in the afternoon. He goes then to

the beach and tells me that my brothers go for a swim there. Many of the wives want to reach their husbands there but there arose such an upheaval in the camp that Wilson had to stop their outing. Honza and Pavel wrote me that they are going to have a special meeting Tuesday and that they are going to get their uniforms. When they receive them there will be nothing to stop them from seeing me.

The military commission which we expected arrived yesterday. They set up their offices on 57 and they took with them some more recruits. There were 60 of them who left. Among them were Kurt, Gold, Lelek, Bittiner, Buchwalder, Marcel, Pinkus, Mucnik, Feinberk. They refused Engel. The only one amongst them whom I admire is Stukard, a small 45 year old, who joined the army in order to support his wife financially.. Their son was provided for. He is only going to Talpiot.

The surgeon who examines the recruits is first class. With him came a high ranking officer. We are told he was once a Polish general. In the commission there were also soldiers from De Gaul's Army and altogether the procedures are conducted in a very amicable manner. After the recruiting there is the swearing in with hands to the caps saluting the officers. Then they go for a special celebration in the canteen of the kafirs. They received 2 L.P. pocket money and at about 6 p.m. they left with the bus for Sarafand or for Gaza.

I was also down at the commission yesterday morning. I could get a job in textiles within 14 days. Until that time I should go to (chavera) This I

refuse to do. They wanted to accommodate me in some place in Haifa I am told there are no flats. I tell them I would go only to Haifa, I name Lamm at whose place I could get some accommodation. On the application which has to be submitted to the commission I stated that I would live at Lamm's place two to three days before I find myself a flat. The application is taken by them to Haifa and they tell me to be there the next day myself .

6/9

The day before yesterday on September 9th Pavel was here. He looks nice in the uniform, much more grown up and manly. They were issued tropical helmets, sweat shirts, and shorts. They have a good time. The food is good, also the wages. He brings me a letter from Honza. Pavel tells me that they were in Haifa at Lamm's place. Lamm was very kind to them. He offered them money and told them that I could stay with him for a while and that he keeps an eye for me for a job in textiles. Lamm has a coffee bar on the Carmel, and during the night he drives a taxi. How he is managing with two jobs is difficult to imagine. Apparently he is quite well off. Pacak and many others come to see us too.. Pacak brings me again some cigarettes. He draws a salary of \$18 and those officers who have at home wives and children are getting more money which they deposit for them on an account. This is really wonderful.

Emil Gruenhut is accepted in the army as a lieutenant because he was promoted to be captain during mobilization. They don't know about it here yet. They have only the old lists. A similar thing happened to some old

Sergeants.

I was very pleased with Pavel's visit and I am looking forward to see Honza who will come either Sunday or Monday to see me. One reason for his coming is that I get some money which they will be getting only at the end of the week. George VI is behind with his payments. After Paul's visit I go to the commission and announce that I have somewhere to stay in Haifa, and therefore they register my name for discharge. Yesterday I go for a medical check-up at the medical insurance office "Kupat Cholim". The medical office in charge finds that I have flat feet, bronchitis, astigmatism and my latest disease on the back-side. Outside I will have to have an x-ray of my chest and also the backside may have to be fixed up with surgery, although they admit it might not really be necessary.

There was some news that the list for the discharge of the broken up families, is now ready. That means those families where one or two children had been previously discharged. However they were still waiting for references and therefore the men and women are not discharged yet. Sochnut gives these references immediately by phone, when he speaks to Jerusalem and the list is expected to be completed by the beginning of next week. There is not much faith in it however. Yesterday 11 people from the *Patria* are getting their discharge, mainly sick people who had submitted their applications. Amongst them also Ervin Braun, the brother of Ernest from our crif.

And today is Saturday and I am in charge of our room. I shall use this

time putting all my things in order such as underwear, clothes etc.

7/9

Honza is here today. He looks also very nice in his uniform. He tells me that Pavel has very sore feet. They will be sent to Syria on Wednesday. Their headquarters are at Aleppo and they are going to be stationed on the Turkish border. Gruenhut, Roubiecek, Fantl and Pacak; the latter two are going with them as interpreters. The other newly recruited such as Heller with Kazi Laufer and Weinberger go for maneuvers in Egypt. Honza tells me that they are having a good time and he is angry that I had not put my name down and it will be most difficult to join the army now.

Pavel was visiting Lamm again yesterday. They brought me 100. They had to pay Hajek the 1/2 Lstg that we had borrowed from him. He tells me that the regiment of Michalko was inspecting the crew yesterday. Then Jos.Hajek was called up. The latter stood forward and said " Well I am an electric mechanic." Michalko said, "And so ?"

Then the crew made a joke that they were going to build for Hajek a transformer in the cellar.

I requested Honza to go to Lamm and to tell him to go to Hosz or to Sochnut and leave some references there for me. Yesterday I wrote to him upon Wolf's advice. Honza had told us about the economic situation in the country, the way he perceived it within a few days. According to his reports there are only rich and poor people in the country, notwithstanding the fact that the Arabs are very poor. His reports are similar as those of Dr. Josefstaal

There is not much incentive to work there considering that the wages are not more than 4-6 LP monthly. Besides there is a lack of social security and I am not surprised that many people prefer to enlist in the army. I believe that it will end up with me the same way. As far as the release is concerned there are not many changes except for some unsubstantiated rumors.

Yesterday when we were swimming in the sea a legal Polish immigrant disappeared. They are supposed to stay here till the end of the war. Perhaps he drowned himself. However I think it is more likely that he escaped, because his trousers could not be found on the beach.

13/9

This week there were more people released. On Wednesday and Thursday 83 people left; yesterday 23, and today they are calling out 45 more people whose next turn it would be. All "separated" and those above 50 years of age. Tomorrow Stransky with his daughter Jirina and Dr. Polak with his wife are leaving too. Tomorrow afternoon 45 more people should be leaving, but we don't know their names yet. Priorities are those who are elderly, those with children, separated families, etc; Once they will have been discharged there is hope for us too.

Honza and Pavel were here this Thursday morning. They will be sent to Egypt next week. They look very well. The day before yesterday Pacak called on me. They should have left for Syria on Wednesday morning but the English had forgotten to provide another carriage and therefore their departure took place only today. And on Wednesday they came here directly

from the railway station to see me. Pacak told us of the affluence of the British and according to him there is no doubt who the winning side will be. They are sending those soldiers to Syria who were already on drill. The headquarters are in Aleppo and the troops are stationed on the Turkish border.

The new recruits are being sent for training to Egypt. Fuchs, Sinaiberger and Heitler are in the hospital. He told me that they would not be able to get into the Czech Army but they could get into the British one. The boys told me that I would most likely get a job outside. I answered an advertisement where they are looking for a textile foreman.

Dr Sachsl was here this morning in the afternoon, and some others from the group, and I expect that the boys would come to see me once more tomorrow before they leave definitely.

Since Wolf has left once more, the commander of the camp is now Kollmann. Wolf has given this function up because of illness. But after a fortnight Wilson told him that he thought he would have recovered and he was forced to take it over again. And now after his discharge Kollmann (Pavel) has taken over again.

Tonight there was a small memorial service for Masaryk. Mendell made a speech, but it was rather slack.

17/9

On the 14th and 15th, twice 45 people have left. Altogether there are no more than 860 people from the *Patria* left. Including the rest of the people,

there are altogether 1200 people here. From the *Patria* one could count 250 women from Masry (Ako), and 30 men also from Masry, that is, the transport, *Dorian*, mostly made up of Rumanians and Bulgarians. Then there are about 30 Poles who have military visas and who are already here 6 months, because they don't want to join the Polish Army. Legally about 37 Poles, who came through Russia, Iran, Beludzistam, and India and afterwards by ship to El Kantar to Palestine, from Latvia. They were traveling over half a year. Without a doubt they will be soon released.

The boys wrote me a letter which was still written here, but they have already left. They are writing that they worry about me and similar things

They have not sent me any money and I am here without a penny and very angry because it is inconceivable that two brothers who have 2 L.P. weekly could not send their own brother 100 Milo.

Today I sold a zip fastener from a pullover for 25 M. and so I have something to smoke again. I shall have a new pullover. Edita Felsenberg is making me one from an old pullover of Honza and I gave her in return one of Pavel's.

Mendl tells me today that until Rosh Hashana nobody will be released. Josefstaal told him that he is now in Haifa and he was going to appeal on our behalf at Sochnut with the intervention of the High Commissioner there.

Wolf from Sochnut is here Sunday and Monday. He is for the time being, before he is getting a job, working for Sochnut, because he knows everything about the *Patria* and will be staying until everybody has been

discharged.

22/9

Mendl was wrong. On Friday the 19th, 63 people were discharged and on Sunday, the 19th, 94 people. That means they were discharged before Rosh Hashona, which is today. Among them from our crif is Stastny, and of the other people I know, Wiener, the family Polak, Babus, Brandl, Pullwer. There is a list here of 133 people and before Yom Kippur we should be all released.

We had an improvised small New Year's Eve celebration last night on 51. Ervin Gold gave a performance by imitating well known people from the camp (Wolf, Egon Fischer, Babusch, Major Scott etc). Then Nory Landman and Peter Mayer sang with Walter Stamberger improvising a telephone (Elsa was not a trick and Wisek has to be read like window). They were very good and they had very good Werichan ideas

Today I am cleaning the washroom with Freimuth and Thorsch. It was our turn rather soon, because half of the occupants of the crif do not do any work I have no letters from my brothers yet.

23/9

Tonight a list of 34 people was called out, and among them is old Mueller We agree with Freimuth that we would move after his discharge, to 51.

25/9

Grandfather Mueller left yesterday. At the same time Paschkes,

Ing. Wasservogel left. In the afternoon we moved to 51.

On 61 they are furious. Egon Fischer moved on Sunday from 51 to 60, because they were forcing him to do his room duties, which he, as a former favorite of Wolf refused to carry out. And he considered such a request an outrage and insult to his person. Despite the good relations we had in the past together, he decided to my disappointment, to ignore me now.

Oskar Haas is in charge of 51. He is a lukewarm, non-descriptive chap and somehow the atmosphere here seems to be a change for the better for me. I have my bed next to Mendl and Freimuth has his opposite next to Peter Meyer. Today 53 were discharged, among them Stampfer. Grandfather Mueller gave me a small box when we said good-bye to each other and he sent me a postcard which I received today. He wrote I should not be afraid that I would not find a job. He was intending to go to the consulate in Tel-Aviv most likely the next day.

I forgot to report that on the 22nd of September there was some entertainment on 51, this time with a bigger program and before a larger audience,

28/9

On Friday and Saturday there were no discharges but yesterday a list with 54 people on it arrived. They leave today. With them go Peter Mayer, Arnost Hajek, Nory, Landman, Herskovs, and Langsfelder. Yesterday there was a wonderful rumor that 200 more people would be leaving soon. It came from Wilson and Stradwick, those rumor mongers. Rebe Herzog intervened

on our behalf with the High Commissioner and he was promised that we would all go soon. But it does not seem that anybody would be leaving tomorrow. I am completely broke and from my brothers there is no news nor money

30/9

I received the first letter from the boys from Egypt today. It is dated 21/9 and stamped 24/9 It arrived here relatively quickly. They wrote that they were keeping well. Nothing about the army at all and nothing about money. Although I need money urgently. I don't seem to care that I have none, but I feel hurt that two brothers who are well provided for with 9 monthly are not able to send me 100 mils weekly. I cannot explain such an attitude and I don't understand it.

Today 58 people left, chalutzim and misrachis, and there are about 520 still remaining here. It seems that some little petitions on Wolf's part released the chalutzim and mizrachis; since there still remain children who are separated from their parents, about two people over 50 years of age and 18 above 40 years.

Tomorrow is Atonement Day and there will be no distribution of food. Tonight after dinner we shall be getting a part of tomorrow's food (the breakfast and the lunch and the dinner tomorrow) after "Niele", the Yom Kippur prayer.

I am fasting. I am leaving some of my food for tomorrow. I have no

money to better my food. I sold a pair of stockings for 3 piasters. I sold a silver spoon a fortnight ago to Bibi Stein to buy cigarettes.

The mood in the camp is generally good because everybody is looking forward to getting released soon.

Today Major Scott comes. He is checking on things in the kitchen. Franci Landsberger receives a letter from Syria. The news is that they are somewhere on the edge of the desert, that the heat there is tremendous and that they are sweating like pigs. They don't have any contact there with the town. It is far into town and there are no women there. They are forbidden contact with the Arab women. They are watching a pipe-line there.

1/10—1/10/1941

Yom Kippur, the atonement day, the Long Day which I did not observe. (I ate, I smoked, etc); but the "mazkir" had something unexpected in store for me after all.

I was released from Atlit!

In the afternoon the list came at about 3 p.m. Kelmann, who became again the commander of the camp after Wolf's release, went down to get the list at about 4:00 p.m.

I found out the next day that Mendl Ingbeer, Freimuth and I are going to be discharged. I did not know what to do. I was so overjoyed. I danced, I jumped, I roared, I pinched myself, because I could hardly believe it was happening. Many of my friends are leaving : Parnes, Bibi Stein, the girls Felsenberg, Laufer , Herzig, Wuenschova, Alfi Rosenberg, Otto Braun, Laub,

Teflovits with wife and others. I am recording these events while packing. I have a lot of things. In a little while they are going to start to pray "Niele" (a prayer) on 56 and 48.

10/10/41

I am already 8 days outside and I have not written anything down. There was no time for it and in retrospective there will be many things different from what they appeared at first. Well, on October 2nd it was an easy parting from Atlit. The inspection of luggage went off smoothly. They did not inspect anything and at about 9 a.m. we were standing with the releasing permit on the road.

Before 10 a.m. a bus arrived which took us to Tel Aviv. Most people were heading for this town. And then the bus with visitors arrived from Haifa, and among others was Wolf. Around 11 a.m. we boarded the bus for Haifa which takes us along the Kingsway to Eged and I receive 30 Mils for the bus fare to Carmel. I almost forgot to say goodbye to the rest of the people. Sachs, Peter Mayer, Hajek and Pinkas were there in uniforms. I loaded my belongings onto the roof of the bus to go to Mt. Carmel.

Immediately I made the acquaintance of a lady and of a gentlemen who were so kind as to promise that they would advise Lamm of my arrival. I got off the bus in Pine Road 99 and Mrs. Mayer opened the door of the apartment. She was very happy to see me. Apparently she had been just thinking of me. She had given her daughter in law a phone call, and for lunch I had dumplings with cabbage. After 13 months at last a good meal again.

That was at about 1:00 p.m.

I sat there until 3 p.m. and after that I went on Merkaz Carmel to Lamm's into the coffee house. He welcomed me heartily. He immediately gave me 10 piasters so I would not run around without money. I then went down from 4A, got out in Nordan Street and I went into Jendl street where I was looking for Captain Porges. I found the way with the help of a Czech soldier, who cursed the army and said there was some anti Semitic feeling amongst them there. Porges does not live any more in Geule and I continued then onto Kingsway with Feinberger, whom I met here.

Feinberger praised the army a lot and makes himself very important. I made a call at Sochnut. I wanted to ask them for money there, but I am told that they had sent them to Histadrut, I took the No.6 there .

Zimmermann sent me at first downstairs on No. 8 for a job. They are going to send me to Moller on trial. And Zimmermann gave me 1 LP and I went home to Merkaz Carmel. Lamm came home with me. He opened his apartment and gave me a couch borrowed from Mrs. Mayer. In the evening I sat with the Mayers. Their son Sigy is a very fine person and at 11.00 p.m. when Lamm came home from his business, I went to sleep.

And the first impressions of Haifa The town is beautiful, the view of Carmel, splendid. There is more Ivrit (Hebrew) spoken then I had thought. There are good possibilities there. Now there are troops everywhere (Australians, Indians, New Zealanders, Czechs, Poles, Jews, English). Food is cheap, coffee excellent, lots of friends from Atlit. The traffic is also good .

There is a lot of time on hand. Nevertheless the bus drivers seem to race like devils. Shoes are expensive, the bazaars very picturesque, and the Arabs terribly poor, and flats very dear.

3/10

I was in town all day. Nobody came from Atlit. I ate in Tnuva, after I met Reinhold with his wife. They are living in a kibbutz and they like it very much. After 2.00 p.m. I went to the Winternitzes. He was not at home. Freimuth was there and his wife invited me for Schinkenfleckerln dinner on Sunday.

Yesterday I was again at home. I was just lying down, when Lamm came in and asked me if I would like to go anywhere. I dressed and I went with him to Haifa. It went O.K. and we got with a South African soldier as far as Kiriat Motzkim.

In the morning of the 4th of October we slept till 11:00 a.m. and at about 1:00 p.m. we went for lunch to the Zuckermanns. He is Lamm's partner. The Zuckermans are very nice people. He is a chemist, a very high strung Viennese, somewhat bourgeois in his outlook, a bit snobbish, a bit educated but crazily pedantic. He has 3 cats. His wife is intelligent, a good cook and business minded. The food was excellent. In the afternoon I was with Lamm in his business premises. He opens at 3.00 p.m. After that I visited Mendl in Maen Olim on Achuza, which is four bus stops from Merkaz. And in the evening I am with him at the picture theatre. It was the first time after two years. Not a good movie, "Down Argentina Way," with Don Ameche, but a

nice theatre, the "Armon".

Sunday the 5th I was at the Winternitzs. The lunch "sunkallez" was excellent. At 6.00 pm we went to Maon Olim where Mendl lives. This morning he came to see me and in the evening I was once more invited for dinner to the Zuckermans. Then I again drove around with Lamm on the 6th, the day of Sukkot. I was invited to Lamm's for lunch, dined at Mayers and in the evening I was at the Piccadilly with Lamm's cousin Sborovitz (Karl), who is the son of a clothing manufacturer, who introduced me to his two friends. They are musicians in some night club in Jerusalem and they are looking for another engagement. They were however unlucky. Sborowitz does not have to make a living as a musician, and it is rather amusing if one remembers what these people were doing in Galut (the Diaspora). In the morning and in the evening I visited the Jelineks. They don't live far from us and they invited me tomorrow night to dinner.

7/10

I wasted this day in Haifa, where I met many people from Atlit, and at 4:00 P.M. I went to Histadrut. Their office hours are from 4-6 p.m. Mr. Bendof, however, had a meeting and later he would not give any interview. In the evening I was at the Jelineks until 9.00 p.m. They are very friendly. I had my photo taken for 10 piasters and in the late afternoon I went with these snaps to Histadrut. Zimmermann gave me a voucher to the Jewish Council for an identification card and I have an argument with Bendof because he would not give me a referral to Moller. He said that he did not have any use for laborers,

that I would take up the place at the machine. An Eastern Bonz that's all and I am a "Jecke"(German) in their eyes. I told him that I would go to Ata to make enquiries there and he agreed. And that is what I did immediately on October 10th. I went to the Jewish Religious Council for my identification card and at 1.00 p.m. I went to Ata. At the gates of the factory I ask for Roubicek, for whom I have a reference given to me by Karl Loewy as well as from Mr. Jindra, to whom Lamm had sent me. They are both very kind to me but they said there was no use for me in an office. I would need an order from Histadrut. Jindra tells me he would help, even if the work was not suited for me, for the only reason that he is so pleased to see at last a Czech face. I therefore returned to Histadrut. When I told Bendoff that I have been to Ata he issued me without hesitation a card for Moller. I am to be accepted. Outside I met Mendl, then many more people from Atlit (the Barbers, the Hahns, Stella Rokach, etc;), who congratulated me, and then I went with Mendl to accompany one of his friends (Gerda Schifaneva). She invited us to her place. She is a dressmaker. Her father is working in Aka as a painter.

The Lamms, the Zuckermanns, and especially the Mayers were delighted that I have a job. Today, October 10th in the morning I helped out in the coffee house on Merkaz, and at about 9.00 a.m. I went to Kupat Cholim for some arch supports for my shoes. I have an appointment there with an orthopedist on the 26th of this month at 5.00 p.m.

After that I went to Histadrut for I LP which they still owe me. They do not want to pay me this money, only when I start working. This money is

apparently for the purchase of a bed. Finally he gave me 1/2 LP. He is really a very kind person and altogether he is in the right .

Then I went home. I had lunch at Merkaz and at about 3:00 o'clock I was back home and wrote this down. I had afternoon tea with Mrs. Mayer.

And now some observations:

Contrary to the impressions of my brother and against my own expectations, I must say that Lamm is super. I sleep and eat partially at his place. He gave me twice 10 piasters, he sold one pair of Canadian boots (Pavel's) for me, for 1.5 LP. For this I bought shoes for 1.100, socks and a singlet. He takes me with him to the Zuckermanns. He wants me to pass a driving test and wants to buy one more taxi, which I could drive. He gave me a reference to Moller. He advises me to sell all my unnecessary belongings. He takes me to his tailor; he chooses for me a blazer, although not quite new, from Hausner of Brno, with matching trousers. I shall have it on Tuesday, etc. In short, not even my brothers could behave better than him. The same counts for the Mayers. They give me food, breakfast and dinner. Lamm promises he will repay it to them, because they themselves have not much. Siegy drives a truck as far as Eged where the English are, and his wife works in a factory. Siegy lent me his suit and shoes the first day I arrived and I am wearing them most of the time, so I am not dressed in khaki. I am lucky that I met such people . Otherwise people are kind and the word *Patria* means "Open Sesame."

I wrote the boys two letters and I gave them to Laufer who promised

he would send them through the military mail and that these letters should not take more than two days to arrive in Egypt. It's rather doubtful. Kazi Laufer is unreliable and I shall therefore send some more letters through the official mail. I see Kazi almost daily at Merkaz where he gets his breakfast. He is clever (almost too clever), and he holds on to Palestine, the only one in the group who knows his way about with the Majo. I shall go to Kfar Ata on Sunday morning and Tuesday (Monday is a holiday). I would like to start my job.

24/10

Today I am already a week in Aka. From Sunday the 19th I am going to work for good at Moller. On Sunday October 12th I was in the factory and Erich Moller accepted me for a three day trial period as a weaver at four looms. I tried weaving immediately on the loom where Jindra was working. On Tuesday I started work and it goes better than I expected. The head of manufacturing, Mr. Manheim, tells me on Friday the 17th, that I should start looking for a flat in Aka. I am lucky to find one at Oesterreicherova for 1200 LP in Bet Eschenheimer. It is well furnished and for Ata very cheap and everybody is amazed.

From my brothers there is no news. I have written already three times, Twice through Laufer. He also left for Egypt and one letter I posted myself. Mendl is still in Maon Olim but for his own money he will be going soon to Kiryat Chaim.

I am meeting lots of people from Atlit. Yesterday I spoke with Jirka

Weigert. In Atlit there are still about 80 people. Wolf lives here in Ata, he has here a brother in law who works in the factory. I am taking my meals in the worker's canteen. It costs 13 piasters daily, and it is very good and plentiful. My wages are 33 piasters and 23% cost of living increase daily. On Sunday I will be getting 1800 LP in advance because the first wages will be paid in only 3 weeks. This advance payment will be deducted from the last wages. The factory is quite nice. Where the weaving is done, there are about 160 looms and one works there on one of two shifts. This week I worked from 2 to 11:30 p.m. (Friday 11/4/30) and next week I shall be working from 5:30 to 2 (Friday to 11) so exactly 48 hours per week.

The work is going quite well except for some minor mistakes. I am working in the section with Popper, who is the foreman, a Czech from Lytomysl and a fanatical Zionist. He has already been here 10 years. He works two years in the factory. He is married and has a little house near the factory. His wife is now in Haifa. She is expecting a baby. I am at his place for about an hour for a drink (a glass of cognac). Steiner is foreman in the spinning mill. He was previously in Kubinsky and I can still remember him. Further there is Kutak, a foreman, a Czech and half-Jew, married to a Christian. I was looking at his place at a spare room. The workers are here very nice to me.

This week I am every morning in Haifa. From Zimmermann I get an additional 500 Mils. Then I put my name in at Histadrut. I go to Kupat Cholim to see a doctor there because I had a rash on my hands. He said they were

bites from mosquitoes and sand flies and he ordered some white solution for treatment. Tonight I feel like going to Haifa but there is no bus going and not even cars. Well the Sabbath, and so I stay at home and write, would have hardly found time had I been able to go to town. A little while ago I talked with my landlord. He works in a leased vegetable garden (in Germany he manufactured pipe tobacco) and his wife is first cook in Mittbach Hapoalim. They are all together nice and decent people. The work in the factory is good and easier than some laboring jobs and besides much better paid. I belong to the workers' elite in Eretz and everybody is amazed how quickly and easily I got this job. I however consider it as a starting point. As soon as I get a bit around I shall try to get an easier job and which will bring in more money.

From home I have no news and I shall soon write to Epler. I often think of mother and Franceska and I wish they would know that I am well.

The news in the newspapers are not good, especially in the Protectorate but perhaps it is not so bad with our people there. Because of old Mueller; I go to the Czechoslovakian consulate. They have there some of the names of the shot victims, which were published in the bulletin of the Consulate. Old Mueller is in Tel Aviv and has some trouble there. The consulate does not want to give him any assistance.

I shall go to Haifa tomorrow morning with an Arab bus and shall stay there all day. And now I shall go to bed and read for half an hour (Kaestner, *Die verschwundene Miniatur*) and then I will sleep and be exposed to the

mosquitoes who are after the spraying very lively.

27/10

Saturday the 25th In the morning I went to Haifa. From Kfar Abu I went at about 7:45 a little while along the "kvish." After Rascot, the Arab bus caught up with me and I got on and went as far as Kingsway. After breakfast took the bus from the station to Carmel. Lamm was still asleep. I was staying for a while with the Mayers. After Lamm woke up and got dressed we went to the Zuckermanns for lunch, and then we went with them to open up the shop. I stayed there all afternoon. Accidentally Kuehn and Torsch came into the garden. They had been released from Atlit on the 24th and I sat with them a little while. They are getting a pension from the consulate and Kuehn wants to move somewhere in the country, because life is cheaper there. He takes an interest in Ata.

In the evening I went at 8:30 p.m. to Ata and on the 25th, Sunday, I was again in Haifa after work, at Kupat Cholim. I had an appointment there with the orthopedist who tells me that I have to have arch supports but Kupat Cholim doesn't make them. They cost 60 piasters, and when I told them that I have not enough money for them, they gave me a certificate indicating that I need them, and I should try to get them and I may not need to pay for them. I went to Dr. Nissenbaum from WIZO. She told me that they are short of funds and that I should see Dostrovsky at Sochnut. I did not go there because it was late in the evening. I shall try to get there at the next opportunity. I have my dinner at Mitbach Hapoalim. It was quite expensive

and not good and then I went to the coffee house where I have coffee with whipped cream. There I met the pianist Schlesinger with his wife. They were only discharged from Atlit three days ago. And I also met the Ellingers.

Schlesinger has been engaged by the King David hotel in Jerusalem and he is going there today. The Ellingers are working as cooks in the Teltsch House on Carmel. This place is occupied by the staff of the British Officers School. They like it there immensely. Later Maibaum arrives, who despite his Ivrit is not doing well. He sleeps on a roof and has no job. And further there are the girls Felsenberg. Edita tells me that Jirka Polak was also here and that he went to Tobruk. I heard the same from Herta Laufer on Saturday when I was on the Carmel. I hope that Honza and Pavel are not there too.

In the mill I was paid today LP 1500, and from this amount yesterday, I bought a few little things for 40 piasters, and today I received 1:450 LP for Honza's desert boots and I have in my pocket also almost 3LP.

The work in the mill goes well, nevertheless I am thinking of looking for something else later, preferably in Haifa. Here there is nothing. Ata is a dusty village, a few houses and a few dilapidated crifs. And that is all. From the point of the scenery it is very ugly here because it lies on a great plain. Around it are a few kibutzim, Banatif, Kfar Hamaccabee, Kfar Masaryk.

I know these names because in Kfar Hamacabee will be Teleki, in Banatif, Walter Stambauer, and Peter Mayer (who now has a good job in the hotel Savoy). But he is afraid of guns, and in the kibbutz he at least can be hidden away.

Otherwise I like this country. The weather is still good, warm, hot, and during the chamsim it is terribly hot in the mill and I am sweating.

And tomorrow is the 28th of October . When I realize this I find it hard to describe what my feelings are. And after all we are here. we are still lucky. But in Bohemia it would be bad. I can remember all the 28th October celebrations up to the year 1937. And now it is different.

28/10

In the morning in the mill I am called up. There were some stitching errors. In the afternoon I wrote a letter home and sent it through Epler. Tomorrow I shall send it by Clipper. For the flat I paid 1/2 LP 400 Mil. for a third of rent in October and 100 Mils for November. And now I am lying down and shall read. I read three books, Kaestner and after that, Dante, The "Divine Comedy;" and by Kisch; "Paradise America." The two latter books are from the bookshelf which is here in my room. They belong to Mr. Eschenheimer, the proprietor of this house. Mrs. Oestereicher is a cousin of Mr. Eschenheimer and lives in their flat. They are here for good in Tiberius, where they own a hotel. It's interesting that Mrs Eschenheimer's maiden name was Edelstein. They come originally from Bavaria and they are wealthy people.

On the 24/10 I was on the Carmel in the afternoon. I received a letter from the boys, dated 14/10. They write that they have received word from Kazi that I was living at Lamm's and that I found work.. But about the letters I gave to Kazi not a word was mentioned. It appears he has never sent them

- a rogue as always. They write that they are well. I am overjoyed with their letters but I am not pleased that they have joined the army. We could have lived here together so well and besides there is Tobruk.

I sent a letter by air to America and I enclosed a photograph of us three taken in Atlit. I wrote to him on one of the reply coupons in German.

I had some mail from Mueller yesterday. He wrote he had some business with selling chocolates and that he was earning between IO-30 Piasters a day, and then he added something about a vending machine which he was expecting. I did not really understand what he was talking about. Apparently a person called Lustig wants to help out with the rent of my flat and get me I Lstg a week. He is not doing well and in my first letter I had written to him to come to Haifa, because it would be better for him here. Over the weekend I go to Lamm's . I got there on 31/10.

Friday evening I sleep there and have dinner and lunch as usual with the Zuckermanns. In the coffee house everything was as it should be, but the police are after them with complaints that the rooms were not corresponding to local health standards but they are reluctant to make any changes. He is considering a move to Jerusalem in the first place. I intended to return to Ata only Sunday morning because I am on an afternoon shift . but they changed it to a morning shift because one of their weavers got ill and I have to replace him. I prefer it this way. Sunday afternoon I go to Bat Galim to the Winternith's, but they are not at home and I leave a message there. Their landlord tells me that Freimuth had written to them that he got a job in

a laundry. After that I go to the cinema (Armon) to see the Marx brothers in "GO West." It was good and I laughed a lot. Before that I go to see Hansi Deutsch. I spoke to her on Friday when she told me that she had no job. So I sent her to the Zuckermanns to inquire if they needed a cook.

I also forgot to write that I spoke on Friday with Oscar Novak and with Ross. They had been released from Atlit only a few days ago. I went with them to a coffee house Nerdan in the afternoon.

2/11

I went home by bus and I sat next to Steiner from the factory and Paul Lustig from Prague and from Atlit. The latter is his nephew. At the factory I found out that he is identical with the Steiner whom I knew at Liberec. We used to have a common friend Karl Reich from Beroun, who knew all the Levits etc. I thought I knew him from Beroun, but that is a mistake. I know him from Liberec. He invited me to their place for an evening. His wife apparently remembers me well. So do I.

Yesterday I felt sick at the factory and I left at 10 a.m. On the way home I bought myself half a liter of cognac. I drank a quarter of it. Later I slept till 4 p.m. and I felt well again. And today I worked as usual. I am working at the moment under Kutak. He is the one I worked for originally and he was really very nice to me, much nicer than Stein. He knows also more of his trade. It is interesting that these two Czech foremen have a staff of 100 but the two Jewish foremen only 50. But the 100 are also much older. Only experience but perhaps also a bit of brains are necessary. In the afternoon I

bought myself, from the factory, some khaki material, 5 meters for shorts, slacks and a shirt. Each month they make about 5 meters of material available, but in my case owing to my situation on the *Patria*, further 5 meters were made available to me through the intervention of Wolf.

The political situation in Russia is very bad. The Germans are already 200 km behind Kracow. I wonder...

19/11

I have not written for some time, but nothing special happened so far. I have a second job now as a teacher for hand weaving in the WIZO school. I found an advertisement in the newspapers, at Lamm's place; some hand-weaving firm. Jolly (Mr. Paul Zwi Bombach in Arlossorof str.) and Lamm and Zuckermann told me that they knew him, that he is a scoundrel; a chap from Vienna. I went there to offer my services and Mr. Bombach told me that Soffer was at his place, where he was working as a weaver and was not very good. Later he showed me his workshops. He has five looms (one with a counter) and told me that he is doing most of the weaving himself. He employs about 7 people, more or less very young adults, and manufactures scarves and tablecloths, and he points out to me that I could be teaching weaving in WIZO. I accepted his suggestion of course, and went there with him on Tuesday the 11th and talked to the manageress. She told me I should conduct the first lesson in a girl's class and she invited me for Thursday the 13th at 8 a.m. to make final arrangements. So I went to teach at first 3 girls. But there are going to be ten later on and I gave them an introductory lecture

on the process of weaving. In those weeks when I am on an afternoon shift, I shall be teaching three times in the morning for 35 piasters in theory (application of material, binding and technology and praxis). I started immediately. They have two bad looms. On one of them there is a warp which I cut off. The next lesson I shall give Sunday morning on November 23rd.

I received a second letter from Old Mueller. He wrote that he was selling chocolate to shops and that he was earning very little. I answered him and also, Friemouth, from whom I received a letter as well. The latter is at a military camp in Gaza and works in laundry collection. His wages are 6LP, 3 LP. He pays for his board. He says he feels lonely because there is nobody he knows.

At Lamm's I have two notices, one to go to Sochnut, it is an inquiry from Epler and the other inquiry is from the censor. He tells me and I admit it, that the letter I wrote to the U.S.A. was in fact a letter to be sent to Prague. He warned me that I would have a lot of trouble if I would do this in such a way, and he returned the letter. I changed the letter and made it less provocative.

On November 7th I was at Dr. Winterstein's on the Hadaza where I made inquiries about the whereabouts of Dr. Polak, and I spoke with the wife of Dr. Polak. They reside at Bat Safim. And I went to see them there on November 10th. Polak has been ill for 6 weeks and was still in bed. Now he is up and about, and he told me that Ing. Cervinka who works in the factory

was his old friend. I went to see the Winternitz's on the November 16th in the afternoon and I heard that on November 15th, the previous day, Freimuth had been there, and that they were expecting me on Saturday. I was sorry I did not get there.

They are very good to me. Their hospitality was tremendous. I ate too much and the next day I felt very sick. They gave me a parcel to take home with fat and some Australian butter and they invited me on the 22nd for lunch to have schinkenfleckeln.

I had a very good time and it is funny to hear about the Freimuths and their quarrel in the cinema Endor. There are few people who would be more suited to each other.

In the factory I received my first pay packet 4950 LP. I am getting used to the work and am becoming slowly efficient and am making less mistakes. The workmen and the foremen are very kind to me. Yesterday Erich Moller came to talk to me while I was standing at the loom and asked me if I was learning Ivrit. He spoke Czech to me. I told him that I was learning. I am trying to get hold of some books about weaving, binding, etc. One was lent to me by Bombach, the other one I got from Popper, but both books are not very useful to me. Glassman from the mill promises he will get something better for me. I made a passing acquaintance with a man called Pinkasovic. He knows Liberec and he saw me on Carmel with Hana Klein. I was with her also at that coffee place. She also knows Fromovic. I have met both Fromovic and H. Klein at Lamm's.

20/11

I received this morning my pay – 3.530 L net and in the afternoon I went to Kyriat Chajim to see Miriam. Lamm knows her, but I was unlucky. She was not at home. So I went to Haifa, where I met old Moller. Hansi Deutsch happened to be there too with two young men, but I did not speak to her, and in the evening I met Dr. Polak, who tells me that his Jindra and our Honza were together at Tobruk. Pavel apparently had some septic sore on his leg and because of it remained in Alexandria. He told me more about the whole group.

21/11

Friday I was at yhe Glassmans. Beside me there were there three Jewish soldiers and two girls from the factory. They live in a crif but they have a good room. We were dancing, but there was not enough room there and too many people. Glassman lent me some lecture notes for my course.

22/11-30/11

On the 24th I received a postcard from old Mueller. And on the 25th I was remembering the *Patria*. It is already a year since that nightmare, a year since our acquaintance with Atlit.

The classes at Wizo are starting to shape up. However when I went there on the morning of the 27th, the director, Mrs. Kittner was already waiting for me outside and told me not to be upset, but the fact is that I did not know any Ivrit. They may employ somebody who knows something about textile weaving or somebody who knows Ivrit. Bombach's behavior makes me

think they are manipulating something.

On the 28th in the evening I was once more at Glassmans. There I met Tibor Weiss with his wife, a very friendly couple. I heard from them that Bobby Gutfreund had died at Tobruk and that Janek Weiss was given a medal for bravery. He tried to save Bobby, but found that he was already dead. So Bobby was the first to fall at the front. It's a pity! He was a good and a handsome boy. I am very sad about this. On the 30th Mrs. Winternitz called on me in Ata, without her husband, who had not returned home from work. She sat at my place for about an hour. After that I showed her the inner city and the factory and at 6:00 p. m. she returned home. I gave her 2.5 meters of khaki cloth for her husband's trousers. 1/12-18/2

Yesterday and today are elections. There is a lot of campaigning going on; a real tough fight between Mapai, the candidate and Hashomir Hazair who are at each other's throats. I am not sure myself for whom to vote and doubtful if I have the right to vote here. At the factory I had a few arguments with Popper about that matter. He is a fanatical supporter of Mapai. Besides there is more fuss about these elections than in the presidential elections in the States.

This morning at work I bumped into Kazik Laufer. I approached him, but then an officer with nobody else but Vera Reimann joined us too. I heard from Heller that Honza is in Tobruk and that he sees Pavel daily and that his

leg gave him no further trouble.

On December 2nd I met Heller in Haifa, where he told me the latest scandals and gossip. I wrote a letter to Pavel and asked him (Heller) to take it with him. In order to meet Heller I had to go to Dr. Goldstein in Jerusalem Street. It is Antkovriat and a library, and the meeting place of all Czechs. Goldstein originally came from Benesoy. He was working there as a lawyer and he has already been here three years.

On the 4th I went to the Consulate where I joined the Czechoslovakia Red Cross and I was told that the British are looking for clerks who would work in Abyssynia. I immediately went to the Pioneer's Labor Office and asked for a form. Unfortunately the officer in attendance was not there and so I had to return on the 7th. When I finally got the requested form, Peter Mayer was there and also interested in the job. However, since he was of an age to do military service, he was not eligible to apply. He works permanently at the Avo.

That same day I received a letter from Pavel, a very happy one indeed. He wrote that he was well and was with the ambulance service.

I wanted to go to Jerusalem by car with Lamm but Dr. Hochschofer had it booked for officers. Therefore I stayed home. In the evening I went to Ata and stayed with a certain Adler at Jechalka with the Pinkuses. Adler comes from Pohorelic and we all drank three bottles of wine. On the 7th Wlzo paid me back 1 LP and at the factory I was paid 1.5 LP. For that money

I bought some good suede shoes for 60 piasters and had my old winter coat relined, and also had Honza's trench coat repaired.

On the 6th I was with Hanna Klein at the coffee house just for a simple chat. She is not good for anything else, although I would need it badly. On the 11th and 12th I had to stay at the medical center because I had a terrible cold. I was given some tablets and pyramidon.

On the 13th I had lunch with the Winternitzes. This time we had ham noodle pie and Spanish birds (rolled stuffed beef). Freimut has another job at the T.A. In the early-hours of the day he delivers crescents and buns for some baker. In the afternoon he works for some removal firm and besides that he teaches English in exchange for lunches. In the afternoon I was on the Carmel and in the evening again with A. K. in Sternheim.

15/12

In Haifa at Dr. Goldsteiner's. There I borrow some Czech book by my favorite author, Dzinyiz Chan. But it is nothing special. Instead I buy some instruction book on weaving. This one is also not good.

16/12

I work two hours overtime because Schoenfaerber is sick.

17/12

I am again in Haifa, where I contact the German Colony to hand over my completed form for Abyssynia, but my application is not accepted since they need three more photographs. So after almost 10 years I shall have my first pictures taken and I shall have them ready by tomorrow on the 19th.

And then I look in the dining room at the Jordania's for the young Schulz who comes from Jindrichuv Hradec. He is in partnership at this restaurant (Goldstein who knows everything about everyone told me about him). I would like to make some grog with Pinkasevic but unfortunately I don't know where to get the right ingredients and he is the one who knows the sources. He is not there and I speak to his wife, Mrs. Kladeracka. He will be there tomorrow.

I forgot to mention that the Glassmanns are going to celebrate their wedding anniversary. I was there on the 12th and I mixed a concoction of 3/8 litre spirit, 1.5 oz. sugar and the juice of 8 oranges. It was the same sort of evening as the one we had a month ago, with the difference that there were more people. And today the 18th, I receive my fourth salary in Ata. After deductions they give me e.130.

On the 16th I receive a letter from Mueller. He sends me the address of Dr. Lion and writes that Pavel was sent away. It means he is no longer in Alexandria, but in Tobruk.

On the 19th I work as usual until 11:00 a.m. In the afternoon I pick up the photographs and hand them over to the German Colony with my application form for the job. Afterwards I go to the "Jordania," a restaurant, where I meet Schulz, who dissuades me from any manufacturing business in liquor. At 3:00 p.m. I go to the Carmel, where I find out from Lamm that Pacak has arrived, and will be waiting for me at his uncle's place at Arloscosof 47 in the evening. I am unable to go there, because I have to go to Ata to the

"Neshef."

Lamm is going to Jerusalem tomorrow with the Zuckermans and I shall open the shop in the afternoon. They want to buy a new shop in Jerusalem. "Neshef" in Ata is pretty. Lizzi Pressburg came in from Haifa (In Atlit she had an affair with Stradnicky). She knows quite a few people. I dance with Ruth Glanzmann and Noami, who chats with Erich Moller (and is therefore up in the air). I also dance with the wife of Ing. Cervinka and finally with Mrs. Manheimer, who is a little bit tipsy and is very sweet to me. She introduces me to all the Czech speaking people. Adler is quite drunk. He dances a Coardacz on the table and in the end he forces me to leave with him in the company of the Weisskopfs to Kiriath Benjamin. I arrive home at 3:45 a.m.

On the 20th I do not attend any classes, but I walk instead to Cekoquis and from there I take the Arab bus to Haifa. I look for Pacak in his hotel "Eden," but he is not there and at his uncle's place they tell me that he had lunch with the Fantls at Genl. I find him there at last with Vera Reimann, the faithful tourist guide of all Czech holidaymakers. The Fantls have a small dining room and all Czechs meet there. I have a pleasant lunch there with Tonda and his wife. He was in Tobruk and suffered from cystitis and arthritis.

Our Pavel was also on the way to Tobruk. Honza confirmed that they were well. First he was with his troop and was on watches. At present he is working with the ambulances. Before Pacak left Tobruk he met Honza who told him that he had gotten lost in a mine field and there was still a shiver running down his spine when he thought of it. Fortunately the sand under

which the mines were placed was blown away by the wind, and since the mines were partly exposed, he was able to get safely back. The losses on the front are not too great, about 8%. They ask me not to worry about them. That is easily said.

Gruenhut is also in Tobruk and very popular. I talk to Tonda until 1:30 p.m. and make a date with him for the evening. Afterwards I go to the Carmel and open the coffee house with Frieda. Lamm arrives at 8:15 and we go from there to a social gathering in Olej Czechoslovakia. I dance a few times but it is not good, not enough room. We leave at 10:00 and stop in Matamin for a cup of coffee and then we take Vera home to Massad, and Tonda takes me to the bus station. I sleep at Lamm's place, and after breakfast in Merkaz I go down to the hotel where Pacek is staying.

I arrive at 9:30. We go to Friedrich. We have so much to talk about we hardly have enough time for it. Franci Landsberger works at Friedrich as a waitress. Stella Rokachova works in the kitchen and Terry Rokachova with the children. I work in the afternoon. I shall meet with Tonda on Wednesday, since I intend to see the Winternitzes on Xmas Eve. I would like him to be invited there too.

24/12

Schoenfaeber, my relief worker in the factory, exchanged his shift with me, and so I have a free afternoon. I meet Mrs. Silberbusch quite by accident and we go to Noam. She- wants to find a rich bride for me. Pacek is in Noam and I make a date with him for the next day. Afterwards I go to

the Winternitzes. I bring her a cup and saucer and I give him a packet of fine tobacco. The evening is very pleasant – good food and good cheer. They also have a Christmas tree made of cyprus branches, a real gentile Xmas celebration with taste. I remember how my father would never permit us to have a Xmas tree no matter how much we begged him. As a child I always fantasized what it would be like. I sleep at the Gutreimanns, the landlords of the Winternitzes.

25/12

In the morning I visit the Pacaks in the hotel and later we stay with Hanzi Deutsch at Armons. Upon my return I find a postcard from Porges. He is well, and the letter I had given him for Pavel was sent by Porges to his son, Hans.

26-27/12

Friday afternoon I am at Noam with Tonda and Vera and later I go to the Carmel. I spend the evening with Ruda, Emilek Fried, and an English soldier called “Joe” at the Zuckermanns. We stay over night at Rudi's and we have lunch at the Fantls. Mrs. Bergmann is there too. Her husband serves in the Czech Army. In the afternoon I am on the Mercaz.

28/12

I have a date with Mrs. Silberbuch in Noam. They are supposed to introduce me to the new bride, but they let me down since they did not come. Tona is there with Mrs. Bermann, whom he adores, and is behaving; like a lovesick greenhorn. She, of course, is leading him on. This makes it difficult.

And then there is also Vera Reimann with whom I have a bad dinner at a restaurant called, "Hungaria."

I receive a letter from Honza dated December 12th, in which he indulges in fatherly sermons, telling me not to get married. How did he come to think of such a thing? It never occurred to me to even contemplate it, except when Mrs. Silberbusch was talking about that beautiful rich girl she wanted to introduce me to. In the morning Erich Moller keeps asking me why I have not been attending the weaving classes in the factory. I tell him I had something to do in Haifa. He says that my work is defective. Unfortunately he is able to point out a flaw. Bad luck. There has been no complaint about my work for the six weeks I have been there. I tell him that the weaving classes give me as much as they could, and that it is superfluous to attend them any longer.

31/12

In the afternoon I have a good hot bath in a bathtub, the first one after 16 months. at Noami's. I find Vera Reimann who tells me that Tonda has gone off with the Bergmann woman at 2:00 p.m. They went to Kiriyat Chaim to some Czech friends to celebrate New Year's Eve there. I wanted to go with them, but they had left some time ago. And so I take Vera to dinner at the Weisses and after go home. At midnight I am already fast asleep. Perhaps the New Year will bring something better in life than all the past years. Perhaps some decision will come into my purposeless and sad life. Maybe I shall see Mother and Francis again and all the ones I love. Perhaps

Germany will lose the war. Perhaps...

1/1/1942

At Fantl's I ordered today out of superstition: pork for luck, lentils for money, and for thousands and thousands semolina soup. Superstition is not a bad thing, but the pork was not anything more than shit. Well, even shit brings luck and on New Year's day especially. Afterwards I went to Carmel. Budie received a letter from Trudie (his father died at home). Trudie writes in this letter: "Dem Otto sage seine Mutter hat sich gefreut als ihm Mana meine Nachricht ueber ihn und seine Brueder brahte. Auch sie laesst alle herzlich gruessen. Ihre Schwester Gisa ist shon als Witwe vor kurzem gestorben." So Aunt Gisa did not even survive Henry of more than a year. I am very sorry for her. She was a good aunt.

From the tailor's at Carmel I picked up my winter coat, which had to be relined. It's a nice coat and in the cold which we have at present it will be very useful. It cost me seventy-eight piasters. At 8:30 I went home. I made a date for Saturday with Rifka from the laundry works at Haifa at the kibbutz.

2/1

At 2:45 p.m. I set out for Haifa. For thirty-six piasters I bought a sports hat, grey, but not very good. At Noami I met Tonda with Miss Bergmann and they went with me to the Carmel to see the Lamms. We were sitting in the café when Mendl appeared with Kitty Rosenthal. She had been released from Atlit only a week ago. At Atlit still seven people remained from the *Patria*, amongst them "Robinson" Mueller, Mr Koritsch,

and Debert, who had made a suicide attempt. Mendl is at Zivat Chojim and is not very happy there. We talked a great deal about the political situation, the war, about the elections, etc.

3/1

I went with Adler early in the morning to town. I shall see him at Sivat Choji, I had lunch with Tonda at Fantls and I helped to put him together with Miss Bergman, with whom he had an argument the previous day.

4-6/1

I am working this week in the afternoon. I am usually sleeping in till 9:00 a.m. I have my lunch and then I go to work. I am reading a book Dr. Goldstein lent me. This title is The Last Five Hours of Austria and it is written by Lehnhof, translated into Czech. On Monday on 5/1, I was at Bat Galim at Dr. Polak's to give him a message from Jindra, about whom I heard from my brothers. He is giving private English language lessons and he is working without pay in Hadassah. In their flat it is like in a gypsy's carriage. How can people of such good "Kinderstube" be so untidy. I just cannot understand it. I called at Mrs. Winternitz and as usual she invited me Saturday for lunch. I am seeing a lot of the Pinkuses. We want to start together a manual weaving manufacturing business. However, I would need for it at least forty to fifty P. But it may work out somehow.

7/1

When I returned at 11:00 a.m. home, suddenly somebody rang. I opened and to my surprise it was old Mueller. He was at Mollers hoping

he would sell some of his goods. He received a small packet of remnants for nothing. However nothing was given to him for sale. I was pleased to see him. He looks magnificent but he may lose his eye. I took him to Mitbachs for lunch and I promised him that Sunday a week I shall come to T.A. I told him about my plan to start a weaving business and he said he would get me a partner with some money.

And now a little bit about day to day happenings. I am not happy here. It's because of my not having joined the Czech Army. I did not do what a lot of my friends had expected of me. Blahousek Svoboda, the barber Woz, the barber Marx, Shulhof, Bezdek, and many others will ask me one day why I did not do it. and what shall I tell them? I am not a coward. The group on *Milos* did not appeal to me. According to my conviction I am a Zionist but that is no excuse for not joining the army. Yet I am no coward. Others such as Rosin, Sinniberg, Jarka Zmatlic, and other nobodies have joined and pay their debt - and not I. Jirka Polak. Is there any anti-Semitism in the Czech army? Yes, there is. Pacek has been talking about it and so had Heller. But this is still not an important factor. Besides I could join the Jewish factor of the British army. Do I really want to return back home? when I think about my loved ones it drive me mad. I could stay here. Others comfort themselves thinking they will go home for a visit, but I myself think I would never see my country again, because I have not the money for the trip home. Here, my prospects are to remain a laborer with wages which would suffice for bare necessities only. But I would I, after such a mess of life, work

myself up the ladder? Should I really return home after the war, what then? Be a representative of some small business such as Sony or Permanent Waves? To give up the way Pinsker thinks would be the best solution? Abyssynia? I registered to go there, but so far have not received any answer. To spend a year in a British camp and save up a few pounds? And what then? I always wanted to see the world, but now I am 32 years old. For a career in the colonies I am already too old. I cannot, am quite unable to settle down. I have given myself until 15/2 to do something about it. Should I not get a job in Abyssynia until then, or be unable to start a weaving business, then I shall join the Czech Army. Girls? There are plenty here, even too many, but I am unable to find one.

In the end there will be no other solution but to become a communist. In the factory Moller exploits the workers as any other capitalist. This time a Zionist one. When it comes to the increase of wages, he favors only a few workers. He is on good terms with Histadrut and he contributes 5% life insurance per worker. The insurance company belongs to the Histadrut, which does not guarantee any interest of what was put in. In 30 years the worker paid in 180 L P. and when he lives that long enough he gets nothing. If he is lucky, no more than the same amount he put in, and not a penny more. The insurance company has only a small responsibility as to the risk involved. But it is better to have a bad Histadrut than none at all.

The Czechs here in the factory don't like me. Kutak is angry with me because I don't live at his place. Jindra, I don't know why, but Roubicek is

rather arrogant to me. The Jews, mostly members of..... have all a very narrow view of the world, it's a party of a moderate outlook to the limit of the law. Socialism for Jews, and Arabs are very poor. The government does not look after them. The country needs better legislation in respect to social and educational conditions.

9/11

Last week we had terrible weather. It snowed, a chamsin which is an icy cold wind blow. I am sleeping under 4 blankets and beside my pajamas I wear overalls, and still I feel cold. Sometimes I drink a little cognac to get warm. It's cheap, a 7/10 bottle 18 piasters and is really very good.

Work in the factory goes well. Glanzmann thinks that I am doing the same amount as Schoefarber, but I don't think he is right. He definitely uses more yarn. I work on one loom about 3.75 kg. If I don't get too frustrated with the looms, I find the work quite enjoyable, but nevertheless time passes very slowly. When the machines are defective I could explode with anger and then time passes quickly.

How are people living here? I went today for my laundry at good Mrs. Kupferschidts, who washes for me quite cheaply, and mends my clothes. She lives in a crif, in a sort of shed not far from Kupat Cholim. She showed me in. The crif is full of holes, the wind blows there like on the streets. One enters the crif through a door. The knob of the door reminds me of a very large key. The kitchen is like a tiny shed, 1X2 meters. The bedroom is like a barn. She has there two beds and a couch. On the side one finds an old

broken ice-chest. On top of the couch hangs an enormous wall hanging, all beautifully woven of the St. Marcus Square in Venice, where two couples of noblemen greet each other politely. She most likely had acquired this masterpiece somewhere at a fair in Lodz. She most likely dreams of such luxury life every night. The poor people pay 1 L. P. monthly for such an accommodation. I must say that in comparison, for my 1.200 L., I live like a king.

10/1

I had a very good lunch in Bat Galim with Winternitz. "Betaamt" as always. In the afternoon I was with Leder and Bredavic in a coffee house. In the evening I was with Rifka at Ginat where they had an excellent program.

11/1

I had two of my trench coats dry cleaned and had to pay again for my stupidity. The arrangement was to have them both dry cleaned for 60 Pt. and one of them to be waterproofed. The owner understood that I wanted them washed. What he did, he made a hole in one of them. I was unable to get any reimbursement for the damage, because I found it out much later and was forced to have the hole artificially mended, which cost me another 20 Pt½.

14/1

I saw the film "Gone With The Wind." It was excellent.

It has taken me a long time, but today I finally went into a sauna in

Haifa. It was very humid, but a massage and all the rest was only 12 pt. They used rods for the massage, like in Russia, and it really was very pleasant.

18/1

I was at last in Tel Aviv. I went there Friday with Egedem and arrived at 2 p.m. The journey was pleasant. First the scenery was rather boring. From Pardes Chana it began to be more colorful, bananas, sand dunes, etc. Old Mueller was waiting for me. I saw there many old friends Hajek, Freimuth, Novak. They were all well. In the coffee place I spoke to Fuchs and Gotlieb and gave them a message for the boys. Then we talked at home till 12:30. Sunday we went to the restaurant "Sales." Later we were until 11:45 at Harlingers in Ben Jehuda. Next day we visited a textile manufacturing business and then back once more to Haifa. I like Tel-Aviv. I feel at home there. It has the European touch. I used to be prejudiced about this city, but now I would like to live there. There are beautiful houses, beautiful places to go to, pretty and elegant women, etc; such as in Prague or other cities.

19/1

I was in the morning on Carmel.

20/1

I received a letter from Honza. He writes in English. He is well. He is not together with Paul.

21/1

I sent the samples today to Mueller. He says he will try to get the raw materials. I hope something will come out of this.

22/1

In the afternoon I was at the Winternitz's to convey the greetings from Tel Aviv. Saturday I am invited there for lunch.

23/1

I received a letter from Paul today. He says he is awaiting a letter from me. I ate dinner in Mitbach, went for a swim and am planning to read a book in bed later on. In the factory we received today a small 5% raise for the higher cost of living. It's still not enough, because now it is very expensive. Mitbach increased his prices for each meal. Breakfast 4, lunch or dinner 6 piasters. I am taking my lunch here since, the rest I buy at Canachia. In other places at Mechi Sacks in Tel Aviv the workers already have a 60% increase, whereas we here get only 45%.

27/1

I went in the afternoon to the Banativ, a small kibbutz about 20 minutes from here.

28/1

I am delighted. I got two letters from Honza from 11 and 14/1. He writes the same as before and I hope they will get their leave soon and come here. But I think after the "success" of the British at Benghazi there is not much hope. In the afternoon I was in Haifa in the manual weaving manufacture. I offered my services as a weaver and they showed me

everything. They have 7 looms and they work only with cotton towels, checked material, and other cloth. The boss is a Pole from the *Patria*. He imports in Tel-Aviv.

24/1

I stayed overnight at Carmel. At 10 a.m. I went to Haifa to the Goldsteins, for the book he promised to get.

5/2

At Mitbachs they increased a fortnight ago on every meal 1 piaster and so now I am making my own breakfast and dinner which comes out much cheaper than before they increased their prices. At the factory I am doing well, about 10% less than Schoenfaerber, who states that he had achieved more of his quota, about 110%. The Mapaian terror in the factory is awful. Curny was dismissed, because he insulted Neumann. At a meeting a girl spoke against WUDD and against MAPAI and was dismissed. Reason: She was at a kibbutz and resigned, and the job she has, belonged according to rules to the Histadurt kibbutz. Mapaj is spying in the factory.

17/2

Since the last letters I have no news from the boys. I found out from a soldier that Honza is at Tobruk and Paul is with the second column somewhere in Libya. I wrote to both and also to Mendl, from whom I received a mysterious letter yesterday with some allusion to "Uncle Kilma."

It seems he is disappointed and not happy. I went to Tel Aviv on Friday the 18/2.

Immediately after my arrival I went to Spanbock with the old man. He wants me to come back after two weeks to inspect the material. I promised him to be there, but I don't know how I shall manage to get there. After that I visited Trudy Ehrmann from Jozska's side. Her husband is a pharmacist at Hadassah. She was very friendly.

For dinner I was at the Goldbergs, and then I sat for a while with the old man in the coffee house with Mrs. Fuchs (the wife of a night watchman at the factory in Ata). After that I was at Matus, where we played cards till 1:00a.m.

Saturday morning we went to Jaffa. There I had the impression that every inhabitant was selling something, or intended to sell. It is a very oriental town and picturesquely dirty. In the little streets stands an Arab with a wheel for cleaning nails on a table as well as a poster; and one plays roulette here, the same way as in my country at the fair. "The Wheels of Fortune." The Arabs around me are putting in 1 or 2 coins. I am also betting (half piaster), but I have no luck. At the sweet shop (a relatively clean one), we bought Arabian sweets, which were so good that I ended up buying more for 10 piasters, and than I could not have any lunch afterwards. Modern Jaffa is clean and pretty, but there is yet a feeling of the Orient about it. There and back we went by a horse-driven coach. The poor horse was only skin and bones. The local horsemen are using a very unpleasant whip to incite the horses, which now and then reacts to those blows. In comparison to these horses "Rozinanta" would be a full-blooded stallion. The road from Tel-Aviv

to Jaffa with that sort of transport, means that it is very much behind the times and equipment. There are four people in it, and the coachman uses his foot on a streetcar bell, but pedestrians don't take much notice of him. There is plenty of time. After all he can wait. Arab boys, nice little scoundrels, are hanging at the back from the foot board, as we used to do when we were young. In the main street, relatively European, shops after shops are filled with Indian and Japanese goods - and they say it is dearer here than in Tel Aviv. The Arabs have already learnt a lot from the Jews. The noise here in the streets is almost deafening. In a quieter street near the port one can see fishermen drying their fishing nets and they play with stones and dice - I don't know how this one is called.

In the afternoon I went to the Sales Coffee house. I visited a nice tailor's workshop in Alenby Street, which Friedman and a partner established. He is doing well.

Later I went to Freimuth where I left a message that I would be in the evening at Porges. I found him at home after I had gone for a walk. He is on three months sick leave. After having spoken to the old man who played cards, I went home to sleep and in the morning I drove back to Haifa. The next day I shall be on the afternoon shift, so I have still 24 hours free and shall probably go on the Carmel.

19/2

I was on the Carmel till this morning. I had a bad preaching like letter from Honza, but at home I had today a good letter from Paul.

21/2

Altmann who was with me at the consulate because of Iraq, was already called for an interview for the 24th of this month and so did Winternitz for 2/3. I did not get anything. I was at their place for lunch and the whole afternoon until evening I spent with them.

22/2

I received a letter today in the factory to go to Jerusalem for a medical check-up on 2/3. The wording of the letter begins that I have been accepted (for the job in Abaden). I am looking forward to this opportunity, but I wonder if it wasn't a big "chutzpa" for me to apply as a car mechanic. Winternitz gives me courage, but when I talk to him professionally about it, I can see that he is not overenthusiastic with my knowledge. But it does not matter. "Probieren ist ueber studier" (Trying is more than study).

26/2

Today at 12:00 p.m. we stopped working. There is a 24 hour general strike in the whole country. A ship was wrecked In the Black Sea which carried Rumanian emigrants and Bulgarian emigrants on board. The name of the ship was *Struma*, and out of 869 people only 61 were saved. They had stopped in Istanbul and the Turks had sent the ship back upon British orders. It is the fourth ship since I left home. *Penscho*, *Salvator*, *Patria* and *Struma*. I don't have anything to add to that.

Winternitz was very pleased that I too was leaving for Abadan, and Sunday morning we shall both go to Jerusalem. We are taking 2 days unpaid

leave. At work: Moller ordered, that the girls who are working on three narrow looms, sometimes have to work outside on six looms. After the resolution at the meeting, the girls decided to boycott and to work as before. But then this morning, another meeting was of the whole factory was called, where it was decided to send a delegation to Aba Chushim to investigate whether it is possible to work on six looms. Once they receive a decision, Moller or the girls will have to abide by it. I am anxious to know how Moller and the Histradut will react to it.

The Histradut deducted today from me 101 P. Histradut 91 Pt. and 10 Pt. for drugs I don't know for which ones.

At the first meeting with the girls, Moller told them that he did not come to Eretz to make money but to create something for the country and that they should support him in this, and they will have to work always for some minutes on the six looms. A patriot! Who on earth wants that from him? And when some of the girls are not being persuaded by him, he told them that if they are not satisfied, they can go where they want to.

10/3

Since 26/2 much as happened. I am writing these lines in Giwat Chaim, where I am staying at the Mendls since last night. So from the beginning. On 27/2 I took leave for the 2nd and 3rd and the weekend I spent on Carmel with the usual lunch at Winternitz, and on 1/3 we went to Jerusalem in the morning. We arrived where we took rooms and in the afternoon we visited the old town. I shall write about this later. On 2/3 we

went early in the morning to the consulate, from there we went to medical check-up and for vaccinations. At the consulate they told us that it may take another day and that we had to get in the meantime a photo copy of our passport from the Protectorate Bohemia/Moravia, which was held by the C.J.D. We went there where they thought we were mad. They would give us without any trouble a photo copy, but it would take 3 weeks.

On 3/3 I presented to Mr. Libal a passport, my official documents, which included an identity card, a discharge card from Atlit, a statement from Pinkas Chaver from Histadrut, and an identity card from the Czechoslovakian Red Cross in Palestine, and mother's and grandmother's birth certificates, as well as one of my great grandmother. That was not enough for them, and they said they would check it themselves with the C.J.D. Later they told us we would start our trip on 20/4 and that we would have to come back on the 12th for another vaccination. We returned then on 3/3.

After my arrival in Haifa I went to collect my trench coat which had been artificially mended. It was, however, not ready, and I had to ask her to fix it as soon as possible since I was going abroad. She asked me if I was going to Iran, many friends of theirs were going there. Her husband, a medical practitioner, joined in and brought some literature about Persia from 1939, written by some German traveler. He asked me to read it in order to have some idea about the place.

I read a chapter about Abadan and Bahrein. The temperature there is about 40 degrees in the shade, inside the houses, which have very thick walls

about 20 degrees C. The largest refinery in the world is there. The gases which escape to the surface ignite themselves immediately, which produces a light in the night. A real hell. I know where I am heading for, yet I want to go and am somehow glad. I cannot lose anything because in the first months fortnightly notice can be given. Should I not stand the climate, I shall return, and in that case I made a nice trip to the East for "His Majesty's money," a trip which I could not have afforded myself and on top of that I shall get my passport and will be here legally.

In the evening I went to Ata. and on 4/3 in the morning I went to the factory to apologize for my absence. In the factory, while I was away, there was a strike because of the toilets. Manheimer told me it did not matter that I missed one day. When I told him that I was going to leave for Iran on the 20th of this month, he said he would not allow me to work any longer. He said I was one of the worst weavers and that I was only here for four months and had been away already for one month. "I don't want to talk to you" he said and I realized that in Ata everything was over. And I reported this to Moller .

"A Jew should stay in Palestine, in Iran he has nothing to do." "You are dismissed from Bachmones", Moller said, and showed once more his patriotism. I made them then count up what they still owed me and ended up by getting 2 L. and after saying good-bye to the factory, I moved in the afternoon to Haifa.

I had left something in Ata, and I went back there on 5/3 in the afternoon. The mended trench coat I sold for 20Pt. I had invested 55 Pt. into

it. I was glad to get rid of it. I had to pay Flora for my accommodation until the 15th of this month. Until yesterday I lived at Lamm's place, I ate there also most of the time. I had to resole a pair of shoes for 48 Pt, to mend a big pack which I would like to take on the trip, and I sold some blue riding boots.

In the afternoon on 9/3 I went to Chadera, and from there, to Givat Chaim. Mendl was very pleased to see me. I think more about the parcel which I brought with me than with myself.

It's very nice here. They have good soil, cattle, horses, sheep, bananas, plums, apples. However, I must admit that I could not live here for good, I would be bored stiff.

22/3

The car took me from Givat Chaim at 11 a.m. to Tel-Aviv. The same day I went to Jerusalem. I took rooms at Bet Olim, where Winternitz had already arranged a bed. for me. On 12/3 we went to the consulate, where I received 1 L Pt. the second vaccination. I remained overnight in Jerusalem.

In the afternoon I was at Elly Mayer and arranged a meeting with her and her mother at a cafeteria. But I missed them as I went to Tel Aviv and stayed there till 15/3/. I stayed with the old man and visited other friends as usual; the Porgeses, Tevovic, Fakarovi.

On 16/3 I arrived in Haifa and I waited there till 19/3 for a letter to go to the consulate. Winternitz moved on 19/3 to Jerusalem and he lent me some money, because I had none. Freimuth told me that in T.A. there was enough work and so I decided on the advice of Winternitz to move there,

where I shall try to find work until they call me up from the consulate.

On 18/3 I rang them up and was told they had not reached a decision yet. I moved therefore on 19/3 to T.A. to live with Tevlovic. Today I shall go the Maox Osimu for 85 chils daily. I cannot find Carny, and at the firm Alfassi, where they had a job, there is nothing either. I shall therefore go today to the Histadrut. They told me to come at 5:00 p.m. But there is another "mies" matter. The Czechoslovakian consulate published in a newsletter through Benes, for Czechoslovakian citizens to register, and Herrmann told me that nobody will be going to Iran and that the first group who went there yesterday are coming back. I don't know whether it's true, but if so it would be bad. All dreams and illusions about that damned Iran would be ruined. I would be obliged to register myself, if this was true. Tevlovic was very good to me, I slept in his place three nights and ate there and cannot bother him any longer. Yesterday I was with the Porgeses where I met Jindra Fantl with Simon. He is on leave and told me that the Agami will be dissolved. Heller is going to Russia and the others will be under the British. A Czechoslovakian regiment is expected any day in Palestine. In Haifa I had three letters from Honza. He is angry that I am not writing enough and writes otherwise in a similar context. I had to sell more of my things, because for a fortnight I have not been earning any money. Blankets, a winter coat, a rucksack, and other little things. I got for the lot very little, but I shall not need it much longer, either Iran or the army.

First of all I ran out of money, and there is no work. On the advice of various people, who studied the letter from the consulate, I was told that they were responsible for my present situation and I borrowed from them $\frac{1}{2}$ L. and went on the 25/3 to Jerusalem. I arrived at the consulate at 10:30.

Herrmann told me that all the rumors about Iran were false, that we shall be going but that they were still waiting for the arrival of Matejska and Ing. Caslovsky. I showed them their telegram: "the first group started, the second group must wait." But he did not let me finish it. He admitted there was something strange about it. He gave me 2.5 L and said I should come again. That they were morally bound by the letter, was admitted by them. Regarding the mobilization. I put my name down. Petr Mayer is here. Yesterday I was with him at Sales - Freimuth, Petr, Lothar Zeisel all asked me if they should put their name down, but I cannot advise them what this matter concerns.

30/3

Tomorrow I shall go most likely to Jerusalem. Shreiber was there on Saturday, Caslavsky has come back and the departure will be within 10 days.

31/3

Yesterday I received a letter from Winternitz who informed me about everything that was happening and today after a farewell with the others I moved to Jerusalem. I am living at Bt Olim at No. XVIII $\frac{1}{4}$. In the morning I was at the consulate. I don't have to save anymore money. They gave me 5LP. and according to the letter which they read to me I should be on 7/4 at

the consulate. We shall be getting 15L for our equipment and we have from 2/4 an entitlement to 40 piasters daily. There will be 16 of us from the *Patria*, and it will be counted as military service.

Yesterday I was at Bet Olim at a seder. It was terrible. It started instead of 8p.m. at 9p.m. Some German rabbi read the Hagada and explained every paragraph from the point of view of the Talmud and at 10:30 he happily got to the second section. Then he smoothed it quickly, read the first part, and one started eating. It was a terrible meal. Opposite me sat one Yemenite and one man from Salonika with his family. Forks and knives are unknown to the Bet Olim and an unnecessary luxury. The one from Salonika was a robust, healthy type. Then they gave me a half bottle full of wine and asked me to pour it for them and their shepherding children, and I just could not get over how quickly they drank it. Next to me sat Dr. Teiches from the *Patria*, who is an Egyptologist, and all the evening I was entertained by him about hieroglyphics. He contributes with his knowledge at the university, but seems otherwise not doing too well. It finished at 11:30 p.m.

5/4

I went to the "Wailing Wall" and to the synagogue in the afternoon with Dr. Schwarz, whom I met by chance in the Getsemani gardens. Friday afternoon I took Freimuth out to the old town and later I went with Winternitz to the Holy Sepulchre, where they would not let me in a month ago, because I am a Jew. I tried yesterday afternoon to go there again, but it was closed by the police (the great goyim church) and went instead with Dr. Schwarz into

an archeological museum (Rockefeller Inst.) and then to the tomb of King Herod or his wife Miriam? With every guide it is different and then to the Montefiori first Jewish colony and the pond of Solomon.

Freimuth likes Christianity. He goes in Jaffa to a Franciscan monk for lessons (free of charge), who teaches him catechism and theology. I was with him in the church of a Latin patriarch, and he knelt down, made the sign of the cross with the holy water. He does not know what to do about the army concerns. He is afraid to join, not because he could be killed but that he would have to kill somebody eventually. Another reason is that he is afraid of his own incompetence and that he may be ridiculed by others. He is toying with the idea of joining a monastery - but he is not a 100% believer. For that he is too intelligent and would not be able to accept without reservation, all the dogmas. Catholicism is tempting to him because of its inner concept. He is a gothic soul. He himself claims that he is in matters of religion 300 years behind. He does not know the Old Testament and the Jewish religion does not attract him, rather repulses him. Despite this he is in his nature and upbringing very Jewish and a typical case for the psychology of Jewish duality. He prays to God to enlighten him in the matters of the army, and he jokes about it, but believes in it, nevertheless. But God has most likely other "daiges" (worries), and Freimuth carries his signing up form in his pocket and keeps waiting for a sign and keeps on walking around letter boxes like a cat around a hot pie.

I did not scribble for a long time and in a nutshell I would like to record what happened between the 5th till the 22nd of April. Well, on the 7th of April I was moved with some other 7 people to Jericho. We are staying and eating in the Jordan Motel. This hotel dates from 1900, and the meals are fantastic. The waiter serves three courses, in the evening, five. He carries around the dishes and everybody eats what he likes. We are going for a swim in the Dead Sea, where it is beautiful. We took part in some excavations, which are extraordinary, but otherwise it's terribly boring. A few times I went from here to Jerusalem and to T.A. I visited there Mo, then Freimuth, who enlisted in the army after all. In the evening Mrs. Winternitz came to the Mitbach Hapsalim, with the news of a telegram from Honza and Paul, in which they asked me to be in Haifa at Lamm's place. I was terribly happy to hear from them.

14/4. I went in the morning to Haifa through Tel Aviv. The road was terrible and I arrived there at 2 p.m. On Carmel they told me that the boys were in Tyre and they advise me to take an autobus and then to walk up. It all went well and at 3 p.m. I spoke already with Honza, who brought Pavel. Both are in excellent shape, Pavel has been putting on weight and Honza never looked better before, as now. I planned to stay in Haifa till Friday, Honza had to start his leave on the 16th and Paul on the 17th, but on the 15th I had at Lamm's place an express letter from Winternitz advising me that our departure was set for Friday or Saturday and I wrote to the boys to come and see me in Jerusalem, where I had to go to the consulate. Nothing happened

as to our departure. Honza arrived on Thursday, he could not find the Winternitz, I met him in the street, and Pavel arrived on Friday. He found the Winternitzes and so I stayed with the boys almost seven days until this morning. It was a pleasant time, we did not do anything, just strolled in the streets in Jerusalem. I showed them all the important sites and relics, we went to Bethlehem and Mount Olive. We went to all the cafeterias and cinemas. Money we had plenty.

First they told me at the consulate that we shall for certain leave Thursday and that I have to be today in Jericho, that they will come for me. With the boys I made my farewells this morning and they accompanied me to the Damascas Gate and I went to Jericho. They are leaving today for T.A. and it's needless to say how much I had enjoyed meeting with them. Who knows how long we won't see each other. I wished my mother could have seen us at least for a second. She would have been happy and would not have worried.

Hermann, Matejsek and Caslavsky were here really today and began lecturing us. I had to hand in to Herrmann the financial statements from Jericho. Tomorrow, at 6:00 a.m., taxis are supposed to arrive for us. They will take us to Jerusalem from where our journey begins. The guide of this expedition is Ing. Richter, the deputy leader. They selected the right ones. The first one talks little, the latter too much, and both are stupid. Today will be then my last day in Palestine. I wonder for how long? There are 16 of us, that's not bad, I, Keisler, Adler, and Winternitz are with the car mechanics.

(Winternitz is a foreman, the others just mechanics, electricians etc.).

When I left here Sergeant Ocenasek showed me a blurred, dark, and bad photograph of Pavel. Then he gave me another one. Ocenasek is a fabulous character. He is sergeant, weapon maker, mechanic, driver, photographer, rides on horses, shoots, hero, stole from Hitler some arms, etc., etc.

When the Porgeses cook some meat, Pavel gets the bones. Porges removes the meat, but some flaxy part remained on the bone, and Paul chewed on it for ½ hour . Suddenly Stampfer arrives and says “and here are the bones, may I help myself.”

“ Of course, just help yourself and on this one is still a piece of meat.”

“I shall certainly like it,” and he starts chewing. Porges smiles. “Why are you smiling, Pavel?”

“I do it only because of the way you are chewing, keep on laughing, I shall tickle you and you continue chewing.”

“But it is somehow hard, I cannot chew it.”

“I am not surprised. I chewed it half an hour, then I gave it to a dog who also chewed it for a half hour and you are the third one.” Stampfer dropped the bone and went to rinse his mouth.

The trip to Jerusalem is beautiful. Mountains, arid hills, the road meanders down on steep slopes. The country has a biblical face. One feels that God was present here. One feels the history of several thousand years. And Jerusalem. The Wailing Wall was not disappointing. I did not expect

anything else. Old, dilapidated partly overgrown by tough grass which emerges from the gaps, drenched in the tears of millions of Jews in kaftans, hats and shaber deckels, and who knows who's head, who stand there in face of the symbol of our two thousand years of sadness. On my first trip there I could not resist, despite my atheism. I shall never forget this wall on Pesach, that French woman who kissed all the stones and the young Yemenite woman with her head bent upon the stone, tears in her eyes, who prayed there. It is not only for the love of God, but mainly sorrow over reality.

They did not let me into the Omar mosque, neither to the Holy Sepulchre. I went through all the synagogues which were very old. The Sefardic are the only ones which are partly underground with the statue of the prophet Elias. I did not want to kiss it, because it made me sick. Every day some religious theatre, either Christian, Jewish or Muslim is not easy to take, but all in all I feel closer to the Jewish one. Although I would like to send those picturesque Jews to the devil, they are rarer than the Arabs in their tunics and turbans. Yet the Arabs are more alien to me.

I don't mind going into the shuk, but I have a funny feeling there. One word from a half-blind hadrish, a scream and a wrong step on someone's foot would be enough for anybody to be driven out for good. The rest such as Mount Olive, Gestamani, the sepulchre of Mary I saw it all, - nothing special. The Holy Mountain is prettier except for Mt. Olive, which is wonderful from all angles. The view from there to the churches on one side and the one onto Transjordan is unique. Beautiful is the view onto Jerusalem and the

universities, and also beautiful onto the Dead Sea from the Amphitheatre. I went through Jerusalem from one end to the other. It was for me a unique experience.

Bethlehem An old little town where Christ was born. An old basilica from the time of Constantine has beautiful golden, many good and many bad pictures. Nearly all churches in Jerusalem as well as the one in Bethlehem are in the hands of the Greek Orthodox Church. The Catholics have their churches usually in the neighborhood.

Jericho consists of a few mud-huts, which are surprisingly clean. There are two larger hotels, the Jordan and the Winter Palace. The season is here in winter. Now the hot weather is starting, and I am sweating today a lot. Old Jericho is about 3km away and the synagogue and excavations date from the Byzantine period. On the highest mountain, overlooking the town is the tomb of Herod, who died here and on the hill-side is a Greek monastery. I didn't go inside, I was too lazy.

At the Dead Sea is a beautiful Hotel called Kalia. It has first class management. One can only swim in the pool of the hotel, otherwise everything is tended to by the Palestine Potassium Company. A hydroplane from Baghdad arrives here.

The journey to Jericho is even nicer than the one to Jerusalem. The country side is barren and savage. The hills disappear into deep valleys, nowhere are there any water or trees, only scarce grass and low shrubs. When one gets down, one feels the pressure in one's ears.

In Jericho half of the population is Christian - Orthodox. They even know a smattering of Russian. The proprietor of the hotel knows even Czech. I wouldn't have the slightest idea where he learnt it. There are no Jews here. There was one Jewish female doctor who lived here. One can go by bus or by taxi to Jerusalem. . It costs 10 or 15 Pt. and 8 to 11 people can get into the bus. The last passenger is pushed and squeezed in like a slipper, the doors closed behind him. Of course, one has to wait until it is full. They are always in search of customers. For this purpose there is a special man who runs about the square and shouts to Jerusalem "Al Gua" and in Jerusalem he shouts "Rijecha, Rijecha", which means to Jericho.

Once a driver was out of petrol. He stopped a car and asked to be taken for petrol to Jericho. It happened to be the car of the Transjordanian Emir Abdulah. He gave him a lift. The British, the ruling class are here too. Next to me are sitting five, who are heavily on booze. A lot of words such as "bloody" and "fucking" can be heard.

I forgot to write that I saw in Tyre in Jerusalem many friends. Herb, Minkus Stein, Jozka Herrmann, Jindra Polak, also Jira Polak from Pribram.

23/4

They came for us in the morning about 6:00 a.m. and took us to Jerusalem to a tourist bureau. The bus was not over thrilling. A large heavy vehicle with comfortable seats for 20 people. The luggage was placed on top. Inside the bus was a rubber hose with a tap and basin. We left at 8:32 in the direction to Nablus and arrived there at 10:00 and continued to Jenin

where we arrived at 11:00 o'clock. We went partly through Emek Yezreel and went along the whole Emek Hafarden until we came to the Jordan to the custom control point Jizr el Majam (12:30). The passport formalities took a long time because in the passport, there was no explanation as to when and how we arrived in Palestine. Schreiber had an expired tourist visa and had to pay a one L P fine. They telephoned because of this to Tiberias and to Jerusalem.

On the Transjordanian border, things went a bit faster and at 15:00 we set off again. Transjordan is pretty and fertile as far as Irbit , where we arrived at 17:00, but the place is not much populated. In Irbit we stopped about an hour and drank coffee in an Arab cafeteria. We were surrounded by a lot of Arabs, who wear knives on their belts with silver sheaths. They are very beautiful.

In the afternoon we wanted to buy some things in the shops, but they wanted from us about 30 Pt. for each, and we discovered that the blades were made from cast iron, some Japanese junk. From Irbit there is a stony plane, the country is almost unpopulated and changes gradually into desert. Now and then there is a camp, one air line, a petrol station, a pipe line, a flock of goats, camels. We arrived at the Iraqi border at 22:00 on the transfer point "H4" and stopped there about two hours and had something to eat in an Arab canteen. From here on the road is through a desert. The country is flat, without any hillocks, red dried out stony stretches. That was about 90% of what we saw in Iraq. Now and then some dried bushels of grass.

During the night we slept little and in the morning on the 24/4 at 5:00 a.m. we arrived at Rutba - a few mud huts, a fairly big police station built like a fortress with an Indian garrison and a well (Rutba Wells). We had tea and biscuits for breakfast for an outrageous price of 10 Pt. We left, filled up with petrol at 6:30 a.m. The road stopped and now we drive over some open spaces, but it is going remarkably well, almost better than before, on the road which was relatively good. The desert behind Rutba is somewhat hilly, some strange hillocks with cut off tops, always stony. The hills recede and we are driving on a plane. The hot air on the horizon is vibrating and it looks like some distant surface of water. We had not taken enough food with us, therefore today there is nothing to eat. Nothing but the water from the tank. Pichler, the head of this undertaking, distributes some raisins, nuts, and some overripe oranges.

"Ramadi:185 km" is written on a sign post; every five kilometers there is another sign post; always five kilometers less. We are counting and this way it seems even longer. In the bus it is muggy and hot, but when we stop and get out we realize it is even worse outside. A car stops without petrol and water. This is no unusual incident for an Arab in the desert.

We are off again over stretches of land and about 50 kms before Ramadi, again the camps begin - now and then also a road, but very bad. We arrive at Ramadi at 16:00 hours exactly and eat at the "Babylon Hotel," which has quite good food.

Ramadi is a pretty little township on the Euphrates, strictly speaking,

an oasis. We leave at 17:00 hours and get to an airstrip called Habania, which is known for the battles over Iraq. The rebels stayed here over a long period of time.

At 7:30 we see the lights over Baghdad, and at 8:00 we arrive. After a stop of 30 minutes we continue with the official from Cook over a beautiful bridge across the Tigris, and we enter the inner city. We are staying at the Hotel Babylon which was the Claridge Hotel before. We have a beautiful room with a bathroom and good food.

In the evening we went into an Arabian cabaret, "Dinavahari." The ensemble: Nine female singers and one dancer. One after the other screeches her psalms on stage, wriggles with her bottom and tummy, and throws around her breasts. Unfortunately they are very decently dressed. Two are very pretty, the rest, "mies" (ugly). The star of the program is a Jewess, apparently the daughter of the proprietor, and the Arabs tell me that they are coming here especially for her. She is tall, slightly plump, has quite a nice face, and screeches like the others. At the finale all the singers reappear, with their screeching voices, and wriggle their bottoms. One of them put her hand on the Jewess' breast and then it is over.

The theater was in a nice, big hall. In the first rows there were only chairs, further back, tables, and upstairs the gallery, and even boxes. The common people are downstairs (plebs), also us, upstairs, the elite, mainly men. The ticket was Pt. (here 100 Fils). The coffee cost 10 Fils. The Jewish singer received flowers for her successful performance.

25/4

This morning we did a tour of Baghdad. Later we took a horse-driven cab and went through the streets of the town. Baghdad has 420,000 inhabitant Arabs, about 80,000 Jews and Armenians. The entire Baghdad is one big street, very lively, with surrounding inns and bazaars. And it has beautiful quarters with splendid villas. The suburbs of the different nationalities have all crooked, oriental tiny streets, a real labyrinth. The buildings on the main street are almost all faced with iron or stone columns with Corinthian Capitals. The houses are not higher than three floors. The buses are de facto cars with wooden coaches - Ford commercial, for 8-10 people, terribly dirty. The Arabs here look more handsome, healthier, and cleaner than the ones in Palestine, and there are hardly any blind people here.

In the afternoon I visited the Jewish Quarter. I had a Jewish guide. He showed me the synagogue and the schools. All of it belongs to the Alliance d'Israelites Universales. The Yeshivah, where there was a cabalistic discussion, was wonderful. It was Sabbath afternoon. Jews in fezzes and turbans were sitting cross legged on stretchers, surrounding a handsome, very oriental looking rabbi who discoursed in a lively manner in Arabic. They gathered in the inner courtyard of some kind of patio. Many synagogues are built this way. One prays in the open, only under a roof supported by a few columns. In the galleries we saw others sitting quietly, immersed in profound study.

My guide told me that under Rashida Ali over 1000 Jews were killed. Arabs are, as they say, anti-semites. Worse are the English, who did not prevent the pogroms. They wouldn't mind if the Germans came, they would be better.

I have not laughed so much in a long time.

At five o'clock they took us to the railway station. I went with the first group, and occupied a compartment with Winternitz, class 2, where there were seats for eight, and room for four people to sleep. There were six of us. We had to draw lots as to who was going to sleep on top. Berger and Blum won. They sold their seats to Krebs for 20 Fils. And four of us slept on the lower bunks, half sitting, half lying down. It went alright. The food in the dining carriage was first class. The carriages of first and second class were beautiful and well kept. However, third class was terrible. The people traveled like cattle, in carriages without windows, with bars across.

The train goes through the desert and stops often. The journey from Baghdad to Basra 450 km long and takes from 18:30 until 9:45 the next day, almost 16 hours. The express train in Czechoslovakia would do it in 7-10 hours. On the railway station we said goodbye to Batovec, Anthony Czarnesky, and Mr. Adler, who live in Baghdad.

26/4

We arrived in Basra in the morning at 10:00 a.m. At the railway station I was welcomed by an official from the A.I.O.C.(Anglo Iranian Oil Company), who is in Basra permanently, and welcomes the arriving employees. After

approximately one half hour, he put the luggage into a taxi and drives to the river - Schadt el Arab. The port is near the airstrip of Oatna. We went down the current in a motor boat about 3 kilometers to the opposite side of the river. There we saw the first car company plates on the door of the cars and at the back. AC means motor car, buses have ABC-autobus car, etc;

Winternitz, Pichler and I went in a horse-drawn coach. The others went in cabs. The official from Basra accompanied us up to here. We saw nothing of Basra besides some dilapidated huts, the air strip, and the port. We were told that, anyway there is not much to see in Basra. After $\frac{3}{4}$ hour stop-over on the Iraqi border and the conclusion of formalities, the cab took us through 60 km of desert to the pretty Iranian border-stop, which lies along an oasis. From here it took us 8 km to Chorán Safr, which is a little township on an island. Here a member of the Czech group is waiting for us. We have to get to the other side of the river after the luggage had been transferred there. This is, of course all done for us whites by blacks, we get into the bus and are off to Abadan.

We arrive, we see the chimneys on the top of the hillocks from the refineries around the airstrip and on the left side a good road with little houses made of yellow-grey brick. All, have only ground floors, all have little gardens, but there seems to be no water. Everything is in the desert. On the left side of the river I don't know the name, I can see tankers from other countries carrying huge pipelines for some huge factory complex. In the air is a typical smell, which I know from other refineries in Haifa. Everywhere on the fences

are notices with inscriptions in Persian and English warning not to smoke. The same at the workshops. We go through a Persian bazaar. A new picture theatre nearby does not operate, because they are lacking chairs and equipment. We drive to a beautiful technical school in the suburb where we should be staying.

It's called "Bavarda". We get off for lunch. It is first class. Soup, meat with vegetables and potatoes, ice-cream, but not a very good coffee. After that we are driven to our accommodations. Winternitz and I occupy a room on the left together. There are two beds, two tables, chairs, all steel, and a built in wardrobe, a chest of drawers. On the ceiling not far from the lamp is a ventilator (fan) which makes quite a lot of noise. Even just coming from Basra we feel the heat. I asked an official in Basra if the climate is always like this and he laughed and said "this is paradise." We have something to look forward to.

We are unpacking in the afternoon and in the evening we go with Guttman after tea to the swimming pool - a beautiful pool 30 X 10 meters with all the modern trimmings. Naturally, everything is free of charge. We also had to have our pictures taken for a factory pass and for the Persian permits. We go to sleep at 10:30 p.m.

27/4

Abadan makes a good impression. Today we were in the administration building (in the morning we swam in the pool), where the secretary of the manager recruited us to work. I, Winternitz, Adler and Keisler

are to work in the garages. He took us there immediately, where he introduced us to the foreman, he in turn introduced us to our boss and showed us all around the workshops. It is a small factory. Tomorrow we have to start working. Later we strolled around the Persian bazaar. There is a lot of poverty. The Palestinian Arab, compared to these poor devils, is a nobleman. People in rags queue for bread, children with rickets are lying amongst the beggars on the street. The goods are mostly rubbish, and terribly overpriced. One has to bargain until one brings them down almost a half. Everything is being displayed in open stalls. On the side, some barbers place their chairs so that people will not face the sun. Behind the chairs are three thin posters over which he throws a rag when he is working on a customer.. The flee-market evidently is supported financially by the refinery. They are selling there mostly iron goods, seems to be stolen from the factory, keys, hammers, tweezers, tongs, etc. Otherwise such goods could not be imported here. We were talking to a Jew who explained to us how to recognize a Jewish shop. They have behind the entrance of the shops some oroches, mezuzas are unknown to them. I am changing the Iraqi money for some reals. I didn't have much left and the banker was also sitting in the street behind a so-called counter and is counting the money on a little desk in Ivrit. Not many speak Ivrit here.

3/5

We are working since Tuesday. They gave us some overalls free of charge. The boss is very good to us. We stack up our work $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour

before the end of the shift to get to the bus on time. Transport is also free of charge. There are two buses No. 6 and No. 66 which operate regularly and then a "Special" to work and back. To the end of April our schedule was as follows: 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 and 12:30 to 4:30. From the second of May we are working 5:30 to 10:00 and from 11 to 2:00 p.m. - that means exactly 45 hours a week. Friday is the day off. For the first job I and Winternitz got the Mechanical Horse. We filed the valves, we put in some new break linings, etc. Except for the motor everything was in pieces. Parts which are not assembled are not repaired by us. They go to an expert. We are doing only dismounting and mounting. Adler and Keisler had as their first job a tractor Fordson. It was a small repair and now they are given a new motor and the chassis to the "International". Surprisingly everything goes well with my work. I don't think anyone would believe that I almost got out of the whole business. Winternitz is more than pleased with me. Today I was cutting threads into screws, etc.

After work we stay for a while at home, afterwards we go for a swim and we stay there till 7:00 p.m. Then there is dinner. Later we do some writing home, or we read. We often take our baths in the bathtub.

Our house no. 951 and 952 are two houses, semi-detached. In everyone there are four rooms, bathroom with toilet, kitchenette, yard and another toilet for Arabs (for the servants). Beside us there are here Shreiber-Landau, Pichler-Lederer and Blau-Feurmann. The rest is in the other half. Every house has a Persian houseboy for tidying up.

We were told they were stealing and we should therefore lock up everything, but he seems to us very good. Mr. "Oil" pays for all this, as the Czech calls "the company" and they get for the work a basheesh, monthly 30 reals per person. We are buying at the store on credit. I bought various toiletries and other little things. Underwear can also be bought on credit and the wages will be paid to us the next day. When we go to the cinema we only sign. Everything is put onto account. However, I was not yet at the pictures. The heat has been lately most oppressive, we are perspiring a lot, but if it stayed as it is we could stand it. Beside our group from the consulate in Jerusalem, which has been staying here for almost 7 weeks, there is a Czech group from the Skoda works in Teheran, whose head is Jahn, a very nice man, and still another group from Histadrut, who were sent here by Solel Bone.

On the 1st of May they organized a celebration. A lot of Ivrit was spoken. Then they had a concert at which Mendelsohn, Bach and Rossini was played and then at the end we sang. The people from the Skoda works and the ones from the Histadrut are experts. In our group the workers are only average. I heard that the British don't intend sending anymore people from Jerusalem, and that after a trial period many would be sent back. (Perhaps I ?).

In the first group there are two friends of mine, Guttman from Atlit and Mr. Russ an acquaintance of Fantl from Haifa. The first group formed a 4-member committee. Mezera, Slezak, Steuer and Guttman. The first two are

Aryans, the only ones out of the whole group. The committee is not going too well. Mr. Mezera beams when he talks to an Englishman, but does not know English himself, he wants to learn, but evidently does not have the gift. Slezak is a very pleasant person, but the foreman says "We don't need any incompetent workers here". Guttman is O.K. Nobody gives a damn about the committee, but Mezera does not work when there is a meeting.

1/5

We were in a bazaar. Vicky bought a few things. We haven't received our money yet.

8/5

We feel almost like old Abadanians. We have a charge account in the shop, in the laundry, in the cinema, etc. Just a signature. At the end of the month we receive a statement. I don't really know what I am spending (I have actually never known) Charging is very easy. From the savings bank I took 800 reals. In the store I bought a lot of clothes, also a good tropical helmet, which even suits me, but is not quite so pleasant to wear. One needs it here badly. I used to get headaches from the sun and was always in danger of heatstroke. And my old straw hat is awful. I look in it like Pepik Edelstein, when he went during Pesach to the temple.

Yesterday I was in the open picture theatre, which is in the British quarters. They played a terrible English film "In Captain's Order," a real kitsch. At the end "God Save The King." Today in the afternoon, Vicky, Pichler and I had a good look at the British quarters. Their club is situated in

a park. There is a beautiful restaurant with a bar, bowling alley, a library all air-conditioned. Some distance from there is a garden with palm trees. Opposite the club is the villa of the general manager. The work goes O.K. Yesterday we finished our "Horse," we drove around the yard. I drove for the first time after an interval of 4 years and it went well. We had some trouble with Winternitz. The Englishman sat behind the driving wheel. Winternitz was in the workshop, and I was asked to go with him. He drove along the road and we returned 10 minutes later. Winternitz told me it would have been proper for him to go instead of me. I explained how it happened, but in spite of that he was angry with me and in the afternoon, when we did not have more work, the Englishman ordered us to help Adler and Keisler. Vicky complained that he had no grease. The English man turned round to me and said "Go to the clerk, ask him for a check for 7 lbs grease and send a coolie for it." That was the end of the discussion. I had to smile. Winternitz addresses him "sir," wriggles around like a virgin, and evidently the Englishman prefers me. Winternitz would like to work by himself, but he does not want to do it to me, although I would not give a damn. I know quite a bit. The years I did not use a car did not matter. I didn't forget much and often I was right about some problem. One has to show some self-confidence, remember the assembly of complicated parts, one has to think and not ask too much and know how to cope with a problem.

If I had to work with Keisler, it would go well. With the natives, with the foreman and the Indians we get on well, especially I. I say hello to them

and don't wait for them to greet me first. Neither do I pretend to be superior to them. The British treat them like animals. Several times I saw how our boss hit a coolie or a worker. He pulled their hair, kicked them etc. "The rulers," as Berger used to say. Engineer Steuer makes strange pronouncements. He says that but for him and Schreiber, who is a born foreman, all the others would be sent home within three months. "We only need first class specialists." Something is happening. Within two weeks they are going to send for Caslavsky. Further groups from Jerusalem have been stopped. For how long, nobody knows. They say Ostudicka and Caslavsky could save the whole situation, that he is negotiating for us to work 10LP monthly.

In the meantime I wrote two letters to the boys and I shall be writing one to Lamm today. All together it is good here, I wished our family at home would feel as well as I do here. I am thinking often of them and I am very worried about them.

On the 10/5 the first people from our group were dismissed. Gruenberger, berger, Prager and Landau. They left out Mezera, Huebscher, Pick and Taussig. With Landau it was a mistake, in the end he stayed. They left on the 14/5 for Damascus. Today we ate for the first time in the new dining room. It is very large, pretty with a beautiful club room for the 3 groups, that is us, the Skoda workers, the Histadrutians.

I am frequently going into the bazaar, where they made me white trousers, white shirts and other things. The departing boys were buying a lot

of stuff, which are not available in Erez. Needles for sewing machines, mantles for primus cookers, dollars, which one can buy in the open market, carpets, rugs. Gruenberger wants to buy a Shiraz carpet, they apparently conned him. I bought for 250 reals a camera/Agfa/ and they wanted at first 30 C. It's not very good, but for what I need it for it is good enough. I also bought \$5.00 for 34 reals each.

I went to see a dentist. He is a Persian. He is short, about the size of Arthur Neumann, but he pulls out his chest, leans forward his head and walks with his hand clasped behind his back to make himself look taller. He pulled a tooth from which I lost the filling, and then he drilled and filled some of my lower teeth which were molars. He did quite well. He probably was trained to be a blacksmith and because of his physical weakness decided to become a dentist. He has wonderful electrical equipment, but does not use much and it seems that he does not know how. He uses only the dry suction instrument. The cotton wool he puts by hand into some tweezers and puts it into the tooth. The filling troubled me a lot and on the third day I thought I would have the tooth extracted. The fact is that he was right when he told me it would not hurt longer than three days. Tomorrow I shall go to an eye doctor to prescribe me new glasses. The old ones I lost on the way up here. The hospital is quite large and nice, and consists of several pavilions.

The work goes well. We are working now on a Chevrolet, which stood several years in the yard. This week we disassembled it, next week we shall put it together. Winternitz is quite disagreeable at his work, like a pregnant

woman. He is moody and stubborn, he knows a lot, but when he makes a mistake he does not want to admit it. He thinks that the Englishman watches us how long it takes us to complete a job. The joke is that everything goes with us smoothly and that the foreman gives him on purpose defective parts. He is afraid of the Englishman. At home he seems to be the nice old Winternitz - but at work!! All the time he thinks somebody is watching us, he does not trust me and reminds me all the time so that I am often all the time at the point of exploding. This afternoon we are going for an outing to Choran Suakt.

I have not written for a long time and I don't know about what I should write. Life here is not too colorful. At the beginning, on the 31st May it looked that Winternitz and I may be dismissed. We were on our second job, the Chevrolet, and it took us a long time and we encountered real trouble. When we finally assembled it, the water began to pour from the motor, and we had to start all over again and that took another week. It took us 3 weeks, our boss came over every second day until on 31/5 he threw us out and let an Indian finish it. He blamed us a lot and an Englishman would only do so, if he did not care any longer about the persons to be blamed.

We waited for our dismissal notice, but it did not come. And that's good because we would like to accumulate some money. Our 3rd is also a Chevrolet, but this one will be finished in time.

My life is very regulated, rather monotonous. After work I go in the swimming pool, then in the library, where it's air-conditioned, or I sleep. In

the evening I go into the bazaar and after dinner I go either to the swimming pool or to the pictures. The bathing when it's dark, is the only refreshing thing in this climate. It is very hot at work, especially after 10:00 a.m. morning the sweat pours from us in streams. I seem to stand the heat quite well. They say that in July and in August the heat will be even worse. In the room despite the fan, it is also hot. Today they gave us some mosquito nets, I am going to try to sleep outside, but don't think it will make much difference. Here at the picture theatre one is able to watch the development of the film industry, from soundless first pictures. They don't screen any recent films here.

From Palestine we received 12 new people from the consulate. The rest were from Histadut. They had to pass a test. Caslavsky was the examiner. They said that all the ones who signed up, had joined up. Mrs. Winternitz wrote that Freimuth was called up. From Honza I received yesterday the first letter. He wrote that Mendel called up. Pavel received from Anicka through the Red Cross a letter addressed to Atlit. She writes that she will leave the next day with her parents (probably a deportation) and that she is with our mother. Also a deportation? God knows what is happening to them. I am thinking about them often. A quarter of what I have here would be enough for them to live well.

Pauve works. In Palestine prices went down. From Palestine I don't have any news, although I am writing. I wrote also to Trude in Switzerland and to Vitniyov in Teheran. On a personal basis I get along with Winternitz quite well, at work we are now and then in some controversial dispute and

are quarreling. He thinks he knows everything best. He is so over-conscientious that he holds the jobs sometimes up. Should I get dismissed because of slow work, it would not be my fault. At the beginning he would not trust me to perform some proper work, now it's a bit better. I am reading very little. I lost my glasses and before I get my new ones it will take a few days. I bought here an English grammar, a pocket Oxford dictionary and some novels. Beside that I bought some material for a suit, one for 560 reals, the other for 250, a mosquito net, a beautiful cigarette case. The materials I shall keep. The tailors ruin everything here in a sac. I shall wait until I get back to Palestine. Shall I return after the war to Czechoslovakia? The Jews after three years won't do there well. Let's hope the day will come and I shall be able to see my home again.

16/6/42

My days in Abadan seem to get to an end. On June 23 I am expecting a dismissal. Last Tuesday or Wednesday Mr. Betju called me and asked me about my past experiences in car repair work and if I would like to work in a different workshop. I told him that I was 11/2 year in a garage and that I worked in the same field while I was at home in the army. He thought that I was a teacher before. Yes I remember I had been a teacher in the WIZO school in Haifa where I lectured on weaving methods. Winternitz thinks that on the 23rd of this month there will be many people dismissed and he seems to be looking forward to it. He is an idiot. He thinks slowly, a drudge with many complexes, an awful egoist. He wants to get everything his own way

and he got angry when I did not work with Keisler. I would have better worked with him and Adler than with Winternitz.

I got a letter from Palestine from Tevlovic. He was called up and is leaving on the 20th. I saw at the cinema the film "Gaslight" with Wohlbrueck and "The Man From Dakota" with Wallace Berry. I have some trouble with my ear, a kind of discharge and had to go to the doctor, who gave me some drops.

And now something about Abadan. There is no social insurance for the workers here, education is not compulsory either. Our house boy and his friends at the age of 14-16 don't know how to read or write. The inhabitants here consist of: Persians, Arabs, Armenians, Kurds, Jews, Assyrians. The highest standard is enjoyed by the Armenians, then the Indians, then the Jews. Most of the Armenians belong to the STAFF, they are clerks, better workers etc;. The Christians are very clean, Indians are here as experts, graduated laborers, foreman, etc. I know two Jews from the Refinery. One is a clerk, the other works with us in the garage.

They are mostly business people. They work in the bazaar, currency exchanger etc as everywhere outside Eretz. What the Persians and the others are concerned about, is that they are all living a very low standard. There are many diseases of the skin and the skull amongst them. The children have rickets. An army of beggars, healthy and sick ones, regard the white people as a good object. The bazaar, a few streets full of mud is Paris compared to the other streets of the town. The smell of meat which

they cook in the open on a grate makes me want to vomit. Dirt, beggars, noise of screaming voices, and the continuous bargaining, that is the bazaar. The composer of "On the Persian Market" should be sentenced to life to live there. And how this all contrasts with the pretty, clean Bavarda, cannot be expressed. What goes on in the mind of those exploited poor devils? They are exploited here by everybody: Great Britain, the refinery, his Highness, the whole world. Many here are for Germany and think there is a strong fifth column. Our store man learns German and told me that in a month the Germans will be here. The Germans most certainly will wait. It is interesting enough that there are no communists in Abadan, at least I don't know of any, For them it would be a real opportunity. The Persian police are dressed in ugly uniforms of cheap cloth. On their head they wear some kind of helmet. They are still elegant compared to the soldiers. Policemen here slap other pedestrians cheeks here. I am sorry I did not concentrate from the time of my arrival, on the conditions here But I thought I would stay here longer. I shall try to catch up with it this week.

26/6/42

The situation looks again different. The date of the 23/6 passed without any drastic action. Our committee called us yesterday and Slezak said he was called for today to see Nail, because many of our group were pretending to be sick. They want to go home. He said that everyone who wants to go can get a dismissal. Hammer and Otcenasek said they wanted to leave, but the British refused to accept it, because they don't let anyone

go from here. It seems that I will be staying, after all. Neumann has given a month notice. But he has a health reason. The doctor gave him a medical certificate.

I received a letter from Lamm, who was christened in Jerusalem. Yesterday I was in an Indian theatre. The performance took place in the Indian club, outside. The tickets, which we reserved cost 30 Rls. each. The British were there too, just as visitors. The play was called "Silver King". The topic: A man drinks and falls in the hands of scoundrels, who blame him for some murder. He must run away and becomes a dervish. He comes back changed and persuades the scoundrels that he is another man. It ends here. Well a story from Pecirek's calendar, stretched out over five hours. From 8 till 12:30. The technique of direction is completely different than ours. The actors are heavily masked, the masks emphasize the individual character. The female parts are played by men. It is strange to see female personification executed by hairy faces, scarred by small-pox, with hands robust and bony, which don't know where to point or what to do next. The recital is performed with great pathos, faces turned to the public. They talk with their hands a lot, and everything is greatly exaggerated. The songs, oriental, and one is like the other. Long dialogues and monologues. The funny parts of the drama are the primitive ones, as is the whole play. The characters of the coolie as well as the scoundrel were well drawn. At the beginning of the play, all actors introduced themselves. They stand on the stage all in a row, arms outstretched like in a prayer and some of them sing

something that was later done in the dialogues and monologues. Unfortunately I don't understand Hindustani, so I can only guess. The soldiers and police performed also, and an officer sang during the interval some song. Then he gave a long propagandistic speech urging people to join the army. We came home at 1:00 a.m. and during the night there was a terrific wind and I had to hold my mosquito net. Otherwise it would have flown outside. Winternitz moved into an empty room, and now there is the danger that they will move Hammer with him, whom nobody can stand.

10/7/42

So the 23/6 had passed without incident and the next date when I expected I would get a notice was yesterday. It did not pass without frustration. The last days in the garage were full of suspense. We were working on a Humber and the front-axle was not an easy fit in, because the chassis was somewhat bent when welded. We handed it, however over in good shape and afterwards I worked with Adler and Keisler on the International. On the 8th of this month we were told at 7:00 a.m. to hand in the tools (also Winternitz) and drive to the department. There was no doubt they would present us with a notice and to our great surprise he took us to the secretary, who sorted us out when we arrived into the P.O.D. - Pack Oil Department of the refinery and there we had to go into the locksmith's workshop.

At the transfer the boss of that department told us, that we were not successful in the garages, and that he would give us another opportunity.

When I saw what they were doing in these workshops, my hair stood on end from fear. Nothing but filing, especially strange for automats for petrol tins. We were tested. Winternitz and I had to solve the same problem.

The material for it was a tube $\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick. Not once in my life did ever file even little things without the right measurements and I thought I would be more able to pass the examination for Sanskrit without preparation, than to create this. However, I tried, and it ended well. One could not call this product beautiful and precise, but in any case the Englishman had a look at it in the afternoon, then he arrived with the boss and finally in an hour he brought me six locks for the lockers where one could borrow tools. And the notice did not come, that means that the fortnight terms for giving notice before the 3 month trial period finished without any disaster. I would have to get now a monthly notice. I am reconciled that one day I would have to leave, but I would prefer to remain here.

The Englishman in the workshop who gave me the test is young, approximately 26-28 years. I was told that he had been there only a few days. Although I feel that my English is improving from day to day, I still find it hard to understand and this particular Englishman seems to have some speech impediment. He actually mumbles like Stepanek Polaku. The workshop is not very nice and also the tools are not in such good condition as those in the garage. However, overall conditions here are quite good. There are about 12 Histradut people there. Blau and Schneider are in the hospital and Kalivoda from the Skoda Works are helping us a great deal.

They advise us. They lent us tools etc; Another group of 8 people arrived from the consulate in Jerusalem. Kalpus was heading them up. He was supposed to have come with us but he did not want to leave without his wife. They were telling us that soldiers were in Haifa. They had to undergo air raid exercises and all in all they were well. They brought letters from the consulate. Yesterday there was a meeting.

I received seven letters from the consulate, two from Gerstl, another from Kutak, who has joined the army Gerstl was not accepted, and old Porges wrote me that many people such as Berkovic, Dr. Blau, Kornfeld, and the fat Beck have been called up.

The weather was not too bad but there was such a lot of sand in the air that the sun did not come through. There were also thunderstorms.

July 1942.

Tomorrow it will be three months. since I arrived. I am still working at P.O.B. There were no examinations here, but machines in crates which we had to assemble with Winternitz, altogether 12 of them. I am working now with Kalivoda from the Skodaworks on the maintenance and repair of machines in the factory. Most of them are quite eccentric presses. I had an accident yesterday. We were transporting one of the large presses from the factory into the workshop. Although we were rolling it, it began to fall on the uneven ground and I wanted to brake its further slipping away, and used my knee. And when I did this the press got on my leg.. It weighed about 300 kg, but luckily the press was already slowing down through my breaking it with

my knee. Normally It would have severed my leg. I was working till 2 o'clock. It happened at 12:45 and this morning I went to the doctor. They X-rayed my leg which was quite swollen and they bandaged it up. I am off work and have to report back at the doctor's surgery on Sunday morning. I am limping but I am able to get into the annex where the reading room is.

Yesterday I received a letter from Pavel. He writes that he is with Emil Gruenhut and that he learnt to drive a car.

I wrote to Mayers and Epler, about the brothels in Abadan. There are quite a large number of them, about 100. They differ a lot from the ones back home. There is not much concealment about what this business concerns. The streets are full of pimps who take the customer for little money straight into the brothel. The doors of the brothel are always closed The brothel Mum opens the door. The girls call her "mama." She is usually an unkempt woman in her fifties. One enters a paved patio in the middle of which there is a flower bed or a fountain, well, a so-called a patio. Near the wall is a long pipe. Pot is being sold everywhere officially and is being taxed by the authorities.

Around the patio are the rooms of the girls The crew of that sort of establishment consists of girls from 12 to 24 years. Persians, Arabian women,, Armenians, Assyrians, etc. The funniest part is the arguments about the settlement of fees and conditions All the residents must be present at this, children, grandmothers and grandfathers, the pimp who brought the customer etc; This is the climax of the procedure. Upon the question, "How much?" the girls shout, "Hundred rials," whereupon one bursts out in laughter

and is ready to leave.

Then suddenly there is a big commotion and everybody tries to prevent the customer from leaving. The pimp, who usually knows English looks at the customer with a disgusted expression saying, "and you are a gentleman?" And then, "And how much will you give us ?" Answer, "40 rials."

And then the indignation of all girls who usually have an understanding of numbers mentioned in English. Then comes the same procedure, pretension to leaving on the part of the customer. New offers from the girls' side, "80 reals," leaving, etc; and finally settling on 50 reals, which is the normal fee. One pays in advance to the girl, who calls "mama" and hands out the money to her. She wants a bakshish which is usually promised to her after delivering the goods. Also the procurer procures his 10 reals for bringing the customer to the premises. (he wants 20 reals of course). And then the ceremony begins again. The relatives, are, of course, reluctant to leave the rooms. They would like it best to stay. After all it is only such a natural thing. The doors of the rooms are not closed and windows are left open. Only curtains are drawn. The beds are quite clean. Sometimes there are no beds at all. One works on the floor, on the carpets.

With us and the histadrut there are about over 200, and Americans, who grossly spoil prices, not only in brothels but also in bazaars . They are ready to buy anything and pay any price for it. It is obvious that the brothel business is gradually enlarging and that girls as far as from Teheran are brought here.

28/7/42

I am still sick, that is, I am not going to work and spend all day sitting around in the annex.. I have to take the bus here with the other fellows at 11.00 o'clock to go to work and usually leave here at 6.00 o'clock. I don't take my lunch here at 2.00 p.m. I take sandwiches usually or I buy tea at the restaurant. In the morning I go to the hospital for treatment of my leg.

Dr. Lamm asked me to see him on Thursday morning. I received a statement of my account for July. The debit has dropped to L20.50, and for the month of July the debit will still decrease to k 10.00

The political situation is terrible. The Germans announced today that they occupied Rostov. Yesterday there was an air raid alarm. However nothing happened and it was cancelled. This was the second alarm we had. I just happened to go with Winternitz for a walk and then we sat around at a swimming pool. We did not swim, but spent all the time there during the alarm. There are no air raid shelters here, only in the refinery. And according to British regulations one has to hide quickly under a table in a room. No joke. When we had the first alarm, about 5 weeks ago, in the morning at 4:00 a.m., we just stayed in bed. However the Persians in the factory went rioting out of fear, long after everything was over. All the people here, beginning with the Arabs and ending with the Armenians are dreadful cowards. The English are very casual as usual. A month ago they caught a German spy who served for many years in the Indian Army as an officer.

There are staggering social differences here, On one hand the British,

the rulers, are living in Braiun in air conditioned houses. They have clubs, cinemas, restaurants. first-class meals, all the comforts and amenities such as bathrooms etc. They are the upper crust of society here and we belong to them. But only for political reasons. According to them a white person must have a certain standard. The difference between the life of the British and our life here is that we are working manually. Before the war there were no white fitters here. As to the general comfort we are not discriminated as much. They each have a room to themselves, whereas we have two to a room. Families have small cottages with air conditioning and are permitted to use a car more often than we are.

Of course there is another difference, the salaries. Their bottom wage is apparently L80. And lower down in the social strata comes the coolie. I have no idea what their wages are, but I think 8-10 Reals per day. In the morning when I report for work I feel most embarrassed when I have to face them. What these coolies are wearing cannot be called clothes. Every rag, sack, turned up old coats, linings, anything at all, will serve them for an attire. Holes are covered up by whatever pieces of material there can be found. Freimuth would call it picturesque. They eat bread. We call it Prager Tagblatt. It looks like thin flat pancakes. With it they eat vegetables, cucumbers, tomatoes and some other leaves which may be spinach. After such a meal they have not enough strength, although they are used to the very tiresome exhausting climate here. It takes three coolies to carry parts of a machine that I can carry myself. They are full of

diseases, mainly eye diseases and skin rashes. However, one cannot say that they are dirty since I see them in the bazaars, and how they wash themselves in the river. The women do the washing of the clothes, and when the men arrive in the factory they wash themselves under running water. But I have never seen more misery than here. The Palestinian Arab compared to them is a nobleman. There are many invalids with distorted limbs from birth. One negroid type who begs in the bazaar has feet without insteps, the sole is in alignment with the calf, toes unevenly shaped, etc; I have seen water carriers whose bodies were crooked almost into a 90 degree angle. That's how I can describe a coolie or a beggar. There are . of course, here also laborers who are better off, Persian artisans who have a much higher standard of living and enjoy some comforts, Persian officials, clerks, managers, who live like Europeans, whose children go to English schools, the so called Persian nobility. All of course at the expense of the common people. I think they treat the lower grade workers much worse than the rest of the people. The Arabs live slightly better.

As far as the Armenians are concerned they are mostly clerks, foremen, trained laborers, restaurant managers, etc. They are extremely intelligent and their living standard is quite good. Most of them belong to the administration. Their wives are pretty. Everyone of them carries around her neck a cross of gold. Although their skin is not much darker than ours they are nevertheless considered "darkies."

The Indians have the highest living standard of them all and I think

that the average are superior even to the Armenians, although perhaps not as clever. I like them very much. Many of them are clerks. The majority of Indians are foremen and they are first class fitters. The wages of an average Indian fitter are 1660 Reals monthly. about 14 L. Amongst them there are mainly Mohammedans and Sikhs (the latter have their own religion which is very similar to Hinduism). There are no Hindus here. it would be difficult for them to observe their very strict regulations. The Indian women beside some few exceptions are not pretty. They are smaller than the rest and rather fat. Many of them wear "sari dresses" which is their national costume and in which they also play tennis. They have their own clubs like the Persians. The most popular fashion here for men is the wearing of shirts over trousers. I tried it on at home and I found out that it was most practical and comfortable.

The Bazaar: four streets, stalls after stalls, and lots of smells. That's about the first impression. Anything can be obtained in a bazaar, but hardly what one needs most. There are a lot of trinkets there of Japanese and German origin, but of inferior quality. Some Indian and English dress material too. Prices are going steadily up. What one obtained today for 20 reals, will be 40 reals the next day, because as soon as the merchant notices interest for a special item, the price goes up as much as possible. It is hard to describe how the bargaining goes on but it is possible to reduce the price of an article by almost 60%. The peddlers in our country were paupers compared to the astute business men here. There are many Jews among them. Yesterday there was one who told me that he had to move from his

shop which he had rented together with a Mohammedan, because the latter liked the German people. He told me that the population is rather anti-Semitic and that only the Government was holding it together.

In the market and at the bazaar there are many tools available and all of them of the brand A.I.O.C, stolen from the refinery. I bought a file and I remarked that it had the trademark of the company, whereupon a Persian friend of the sales man said, "Never mind that it is from the company. Everything in Abadan is from the company."

Silverware and local products are very beautiful, but expensive. A cigarette box which I bought in May for 220 RIs, costs now 350. Always the Americans drive the prices up.

7/8/42

Since Saturday, the first of this month, I am working again. My leg is good again. I received two letters from Honza and in the second he thanks me for the money which I sent him for his birthday on July 4th, and which he unfortunately was unable to receive because the cashier had not sent it. My account dropped in June to L20 and because I had not spent much in July (500 RIs in some store), my debit account was in July below L10 and I hope to square the whole thing out by August. Winternitz had 6 LP at home. 3.5 he owed me and the rest he lent me. I added to that 7 dollars, and I sent it to the boys via Loebel who is leaving today for Palestine. Loebel is a soldier, attached to the Czechoslovakian command, a Czech citizen, and a very friendly person. He worked here as a " shift clerk" at P.O.B. And now

something about Ocenas (Paternostrum). Ocenas had talked for two months of going to Russia with the Czech unit. He mentioned this several times but never did. Since he was a first class fitter he received from the company offers for pay increases which he did not accept. He wrote to the company that he would only stay with the company under the following conditions: Salary 120 dollars in (480 L). Further he expected the company to provide him with a Czech-English secretary from Jerusalem. Further he proposed to bring into the country 15, 000 Czechs from India (imaginary ones), substantiating his demands by claiming that the military defense of Abadan was unsatisfactory. He had some point in this when he said he would like to form from our group and the Skoda workers a military unit which he would train himself. He asked for two cannons, 4 light guns, hand grenades, etc. Those were his demands. When he came out with the training plans the Skoda workers told him that they would smash them in his face.

I told him that with such things they could all lick my arse. He was furious. The company thought he had gone off his rocker. They telephoned the troop in Teheran. Stoja who is their military distributor there, told them that he did not know of any Czech soldier in Abadan. In case he is a soldier he would arrest him that he had not reported for duty. Should he not be one, he would arrest him that he was pretending to be one. Ocenas went around in the meantime in his artillery uniform. He made out that he was a captain and made a deep impression on the Persians in the Persian club. The company was contemplating having him arrested, but Steuer got him out of

it. Russia, where he wanted to go, became Palestine. However, he continued telling us that he was going to Russia via Baghdad. Chosul and Aleppo, that's where according to him the Russians were.

He left last week. He said good bye to only a few people. While he was packing his suitcase he also packed a spraying gun which belonged to the company. His behavior made a lot of damage and he spoilt our reputation. He was a notorious liar and an idiot with a superiority complex .

We have another entertainment now. The group of Solel Bonet who are all Palestinians have been forbidden entrance into the annex. They say one does not know if it is for sure. Sacharov is a terrible intrigue maker and does not like his society to fall apart, declared at first that he was given this order in writing, but later when he was challenged to show the letter he admitted that it was only an oral undertaking, and now it seems that Mr. Sacharov was inventing the whole thing altogether. Whatever may be, it's a dirty trick, either on the part of the English, or from Sacharov's side. And they say that he was going to build for the whole Bavarda a cinema so that we would not go to Brauns. Histadruts have their tails between their legs, and instead of doing "aziz" and continue going to the Annex they indulge in passive resistance and they boycott even the cinema etc; Such attitudes are ridiculous to the British and they have a good laugh. Among our people this sort of behavior created some strong reaction. Some idiots like Mr. Schneider, Mr Reuermann etc, who discovered in themselves lately a great upsurge of Czech. patriotism are enjoying the whole thing. Once more a

phenomenon which I noticed the whole time in my emigration, dirtying one's own nest. People who lived in Eretz some years, people who, when they lived in Czechoslovakia for many years, were unable to learn the language and don't know the language, behave here like the biggest patriots. The biggest idiots, without a speck of education and behavior, pester the Arab boys and have even their socks washed by them.

Naturally a behavior from the P.K.R. For example Mr. L and Mr. S. are criticizing Palestine and the Jews. Some of them even talk about them as smelly. Winternitz, himself baptized, but otherwise a 100% Jew talked about Herrmann from the consulate as a smelly Jew. Besides they were all only too glad to receive from the Jews in Palestine some clothes. Nobody refused the Jewish money from Sochnut and everyone of them was happy to have reached Palestine, the only country which accepted them. A bad lot they are, 95% of the Czech group at Abadan. What does Slezak the only gentile of the group think of them and the Skoda workers ?

The English are also some people. There were many insults, mumbling and cussing about "those bloody Jews." But it is luck that they know that we are Jews. Patulla in the garage knows that Adler and Keisler are "two Jews from Czechoslovakia." "Sergeant" at the P.O.D. told Albert from Solel Bonet that in his eyes he is not better than the last coolie. They are different anti-Semites than the Germans, they don't talk or write about it. But they are anti-Semites nevertheless.

There is nothing new concerning work. The working conditions in

P.O.D. are better than in the garage. I learn more there and what the load of work concerns. There is only real work on Saturday (factory day). Otherwise there is little work. The days are now very hot and we are sweating a great deal.

16/8/42

Yesterday I went at 11.00 a.m. to work. The bus was overcrowded and went up a steep hill. A truck overtook us and a cyclist came into its way. The bus was trying to avoid a collision and went over the curb. It happened on a flat road near the canal at the bazaar, before getting to the refinery. Altogether nothing serious happened. Pickholz was the worst hurt, some broken glass in his forehead. His eyes were all right. Patrias sprained his ankle and some others had minor injuries. . I got it again into my left leg. I have a badly bruised knee. They took us immediately into the hospital. They bandaged our cuts and asked us to come back today. I hoped I would get out another 7-8 happy days at the annex. Unfortunately they sent me back to work today. But I started there only at 11:a.m.

9/9/42:

Nothing happened much during this time. A new Czechoslovakian group arrived in Jerusalem. 12 people altogether, among them, three gentiles. At work it is the same. I work still with Kallvoda. Not much work at all. We keep on thinking what we should do to have more work, perhaps a nice restroom where one could smoke. Saturday is factory day or maintenance day. The factory stands still. Machines are being repaired and

there is seldom over-time work. I received a very disappointed letter from Honza; that he had not received the money yet. The 4 L which I had sent through Mrs. Winternitz. Pavel kept all for himself. And since the letter was dated 2/8/42 they could not yet have the money from Loebl.

On 5/9 I received a letter from Trudy Lamm from Switzerland. Bad news! She writes that mother and Francis had left 3 months ago, that they were deported probably to Poland. So did Trudy's parents. Although I had thought this would happen, I was very stricken by this news. God knows whether we shall see them again after the war, where we shall have to look for them, and if we shall see them at all. I wrote immediately to Lamm to give the news to the boys and told him about the contents of Trudy's letter.

The weather has improved lately, the humidity disappeared, and the temperature has also dropped. During the night, towards morning it is getting cold and we cover ourselves with blankets.

The political situation in Russia at Stalingrad is bad, despite the fact that the Russians are bravely resisting. Should the war go on throughout the winter it is quite possible that we may win.

23/9/42

It is exactly five months since I left Palestine. Time passed very quickly. All in all, time, days, weeks and months pass so fast that one can hardly keep up counting the days. I received on the 10th the second letter from Trudy, this time through Turkey. Over all she wrote more or less the same as in the first letter. She sent the letter another way only to be sure

that at least one of them would reach me.

I had a very unpleasant letter exchange with the boys. I received a letter from Honza dated 23/8. At that time he still did not have the money which I sent to him through Loebel a month ago. He wrote to me in his usual ugly tone, which was extremely rude. He must have been set up against me by Berger, who is obviously disappointed that I remained here. Berger knew that they exchanged (soon after I arrived) 10 postal return coupons but he did not know that after further attempts to have them exchanged, they returned them to me, because they are not valid here. He must have told the boys about it and Honza naturally reproaches me now for having sold their coupons, which were however, bought entirely with my money.

A letter arrived from Pavel on 17/9 dated 28/8. and at last they confirmed receipt of the money. He received it on 28/8, but Honza is on holiday. Pavel, however, seems to identify himself with Honza. I also wrote to him sharply. Winternitz received a letter from his wife. Honza was at her place and complained about me. I arranged then with a firm (since I have already 14 shillings credit on my account) to send regularly to the boys, to Honza's address. I wanted to send it first as a "special" so they would receive it sooner, but under these circumstances they can go to blazes. I did my duty after all and I am not going to be worried whether they receive it or not. I am simply sending it.

We work now from 6.30 a.m. to 10:45 and from 11:45 until 2:30 p.m. From Saturday the 26th of this month we shall be working again to 4.30 p.m.

Stupid. I am working now without supervision and am transforming "squeezey."

I worked on Rosh Hashana but later I felt sorry I did, more out of symbolical reasons. Besides some of those Schneidres and Lederers who were working with me, who discovered their patriotic feeling after Palestine did not welcome them with an old age pension. They are all from the Sudetan. They don't know any Czech at all, and if Hitler had left out of his Mein Kampf the anti-Semitic program, then they would be all in S.A. On Yom Kippur I did not work. Shledmore was very surprised that I am a Jew, but the way I fasted this time I did not fast for years. As last year I observed only the mazkir. Prayers were held in our club-room. Most of the people ate. The mayor of the Jewish Community in Abadan was invited. They borrowed two Torahs with their six sons from the bazaar.

25/11/42

I did not write for a long time. But there was nothing to write about. Life flows here like water. We know very little about the war except that sometimes we see soldiers, read something in the paper or hear something on the radio. It's not bad here at all, rather idyllic. Politically there are quite significant changes. The Allies have occupied French Morocco and Algiers and are marching on Tunis where the Germans and Italians debarked. French West Africa joined the Allies and Dakar is occupied. Rommel had advanced following the Allied offensive from Egypt to Benghasi, and is further advancing to El Agheil, where he probably wants to stop. Also in Russia the

offensive has commenced on all fronts and it seems that the situation at Stalingrad will decide the further outcome of the war. According to the latest news Timoshenkoy's northern army has already joined the defense forces at Stalingrad and the Germans are threatened of being cut off. It seems that the Germans are giving themselves up in great numbers. Yesterday there was a report of the fatalities and the wounded, about 75,000.

In the Far East the Chinese are also successful and in New Guinea, the Australians are advancing to Buna. For three years we have been listening to the radio and heard nothing else but success for the Germans and the plight of the Allied forces. At last, it seems that the Germans have to listen for a change to bad news and we, to the good ones. Perhaps the end is not too far in sight. I predict against all the other optimistic views, the year 1944 as the end of the war. But should it be sooner

In Abadan there is cool weather now and good news. Personally little has changed. I sent the boys an equally rude answer to their letter. The letters I got from Honza since, were evident of a moderate and more peaceful tone. I wrote to him the day before yesterday. I fear that he is somewhere on the front, as the Czechs are again in Africa. Pavel wrote too. I have no news from Trudy. On the 2nd and 3rd of October I was in Basra. I was there illegally. Mueller and the Histadutniks conducted us there. Beside me there was Abrahamovic, Levin, and a certain Hellman.

From the bazaar with a private taxi to Khoramchuhru, from there by small boat to Shatte Arab, and on the Iraqi side, by foot over a small island,

and once more by boat ashore. From the Iraqi police station we telephoned to Basra for a taxi which was sent to us by a police major. On the way we were stopped by Iraqi cars. I felt my heart beating fast, and when we asked them if there was anything wrong they laughed and let us "American people" go. And so we arrived on 2/10 at lunch time in Basra. In the police station where we were waiting for the taxi from Basra was an original Arabian inn in the desert, constructed of clay, where we drank a magnificent tea. I never thought that tea could taste so good.

Basra is, considering the oriental living standard, quite a nice town of about 1/2 million inhabitants. Excellent well stocked bazaars with the best European goods, but everything is extremely expensive, except for 8 films which are for 250 fils terribly cheap, especially when compared with those in Abadan (60 reals) I did not buy anything. In the evening we were in an American cabaret, the same as in Baghdad at present. We stayed overnight at Nathan's, a Jewish merchant, who has a branch in Abadan. And in Basra he has his hometown. He has his parents and a nice house. They were very hospitable to us, but they cashed in, in another way of which I will be telling later. They live like Arabs And so I was able to see an Arab-Jewish household.

Basra consists of 3 parts, Basra City, Ashar, and Margil. The port and the business is concentrated in Ashar. Europeans live in Margil. The airport is there and also the railway station. I remembered it from my last journey to Abadan. The city also has brothels. We returned with Nathan, his brother

and mother, and with two other Iraqi Jews . There were 10 of us. Therefore we took a bus, no, rather a station car. Nathan and his entourage had 4 nice suitcases. When we got into the car they announced solemnly that if anybody should ask us whose suitcases they were, we must say they are ours. We looked at each other with consternation and off we went. The return journey went off quite easily. When we left Basra we found that a police officer looked into the car but when he saw we were "sahibs" or whatever they called white people there, they went away without making further inquiries. On the small island which we had to cross by foot before going by boat to Khoramchachra, we were stopped by an Iraqi soldier who received 100 Fils from Nathan. In Khoramchachra we caught a truck which belonged to the firm and which brought us back to Bavarda. Nathan was waiting for a taxi in Khoramehachra together with Hellmann and Mueller, and including the smuggled four suitcases. Therefore the suitcases reached Abadan with our help, as nobody dared to approach our vehicle or the boat when they saw white faces. That was our fee and it was worth a fortune. What was in the suitcases was probably gold, since I often heard talk about such a transaction at Nathan's. The whole affair had a sequel. Mueller and another Histadrut man were sent home by the company, since it was proven (by the Intelligence Service) that he smuggled hashish. He received for one trip 20 L, although he had no luggage when he traveled with me and he had no intention of going there. He was talked into it only when we got to Khorumshahr. There is no doubt that I could have been easily implicated in

the whole matter and been in real trouble. I don't know whether he was smuggling it already before I went, or later. Yet I don't believe that he had it then on him. Perhaps Abrahamovic or Levin (perhaps Hellmann), the truth is that I would have been very unhappy leaving Abadan. I would not have had other scruples. My return trip cost me 180 Rls (terribly cheap) and there I spent, including the purchases of films, about 400 Rls.

On 9/10, Friday, I went with Pichler, Adler and Zebovic on a nice excursion. We went at 1 p.m. to Khoramshahr and from there with a boat along Karuna, (Shatt el Bahamashir) down to Abaden. Karun is a remarkable river. It flows into two directions The island Abadan is washed on one side by the Shattel Arab and on the other side by the Karuna. which flows into the Shattel Arab on both ends northwest and southeast. From Khorumshar we went with a small sailing boat which consisted of a sail which was almost in shreds.

A barge followed us, the Analaka, which sails as far as Al Kuwait. They caught up with us and took us on board. We climbed the deck, had some tea and told them, in a mixture of Arabian, Persian and English what kind of jobs we had, and they invited us to come with them the following week on a trip to Kuwait. A trip should take 6 hours. We went with them about half an hour. Then we took our little boat to the shore, we got out, and walked across the island to Abadan, half an hour across the desert to Braiun garage, and by service bus home. It cost us per head 30 Rls. Pichler took pictures, but on the bigger boat he ran out of film.

I am enjoying the work in the factory and I must say despite my usual bad luck, everything went so far all right. We received a salary increase in three categories. At 2, 4 and at 7 L. I received only L 2. Some married workers like Winternitz and Schneider, who made a special application received L 4, and then to everybody's surprise Keislör and Adler received L7 each. There was a lot of protest. Slezak, the pig, protested. How come that these two should have the same as he. Schreiber, Weiner and I did not sign the increase. The committee, mainly Steuer and his clique were furious, since they had not the slightest influence as to increases, and claimed that increases were not given as to how much licking and crawling was being done but only in relation to the principals themselves. After lots of arguments Schreiber and Weiner received after a month, another increase of L3, so that they also got 37 9L. The increases were backdated to the first of October and we received a letter informing us of this on the 2nd of November..

I am quite happy with my increase of 2L because I do not think I am worth more, especially in comparison with the others. I think I would stay here even if I had to lose 5L.

A new Czech group arrived from Palestine, many inhabitants from the Sudeten among them. They don't know Czech. Weingarten arrived with them. He works with P.O. and likes it. He is getting only L25 (three of them get more) and that it most unfair. He has been here 6 weeks.

The consulate has deducted from my salary 2L19/9. I don't know why and I shall go into it.

Cultural activities in the Czech group have been slack. They have been organizing "spoken newspapers" every 2 weeks but they had them so far only twice. The program: Jahn gives a talk, a very good thing called, "X days in Ferina," talks about the foreign legion. Jakl recites a poem, etc.

In the first newspaper I had translated a political article, "The World behind the Headlines." This did not have much success, as they did not invite me again. It seems that I read the article too fast. But I translated it almost without a dictionary. It took me 3 hours and it was first class.

Dr. Lessner arrived with the last group. He is the son in law of Max Sborovito from Petach Tikva, also Lamm's cousin. He gave me a message from Lamm and he told me about him. Jindra Fantl had told me about Lessner

When Jindra visited Sborovitz he remarked about his son in law that he was like an ivy, that he was clinging and sprouting. But I found he was a very nice and kind person.

I go often to the club. I seldom go to the annex. The weather is beautiful at night, cool, and no air conditioning is necessary. And besides we are working already for two months until 4:30 (7-11:30, 12.30 -16.:30). I often see Kalivoda. He is a clever, astute locksmith from Hodonin and we go for long walks in the evening. He was 8 years in Argentina, in Peru, Chile, and he has lots to talk about .

And today, at noon at "tiffin" as we call lunch here, I received a letter from Eppler from U.S.A., the answer to my letter. His letter was dated 10/10.

He writes that he is well. That he knows that my people have been deported, and sends me the address of George. I shall write to him and this is about all that can be written about the time from 23/9-26/11.

POSTSCRIPT

Otto had dreamed of joining a Jewish Brigade that would be under the Allied command, but separate from any particular country. This would acknowledge recognition of the Jewish people. But when he was recruited to work for the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, he went to Abadan, Iran. When the war was over, he felt hopeless that Palestine could ever become a Jewish homeland, thinking that the 70 million Arabs in the neighboring countries would not allow that to happen. Consequently, he emigrated to the United States, with the hope that when he established himself there, he would bring over his brothers. Otto and I met while I was attending graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania. We married in 1949.

Before leaving for the States he returned to Prague briefly, to reunite with his brothers, and search for his mother and Frantiska. He did not believe the truth until he received a final letter in 1947 when he was already in the States. Ida and Frantiska were sent to Terezin Concentration Camp on May 7, 1942. They were shipped to Auschwitz on September 6, 1943. and were cremated in March, 1944. He eventually learned that 54 members of his extended family were murdered by the Nazis.

Hanza and Pavel fought in Tobruk and El Alamein. They were demobilized in Europe and returned to Czechoslovakia. Pavel married Gerta, and Hanza married Dita; both, survivors of Terezin Concentration Camp. Hanza completed his medical training and began to practice medicine in Czechoslovakia. He and Dita fled the country in 1948, after the Communists took over, settling eventually in Australia.

The overpowering grief and guilt over the terrible deaths of his mother and sister never left Otto. When Hanza visited us in the States in 1958, he and Otto grieved openly

and together about the loss of their mother and sister, and their terrible fate. In 1976 the six of us, Pavel and Gerta, Hanza and Dita, and Otto and I had a memorable reunion in Vienna.

On April 16, 1979 Otto succumbed to heart failure. A year later, to the day, Hanza too, died. The wire I sent him a year before, apprising him of his brother's death, still lay on the night table next to his bed. Pavel died in January, 2000, a few days after Gerta died. Each brother died in a different country, on a different continent.

Their legacy lives on in the lives of their children:

Franci Leva, administrator in the town of Most, the Czech Republic.

Hanza Bor, an actor in the Czech Republic

William Bor, a psychiatrist practicing in Brisbane, Australia.

Tom Bor, an alcoholic and drug counselor in Brisbane, Australia.

Desley Roy, a pianist and music teacher in Melbourne, Australia

Karen Ora Edelstein, a painter in Atlanta, Georgia

Kenneth Gary Edelstein, editor of an Atlanta newspaper.

And the grandchildren:

Kate, Elisska, Magdalena, Vojta, Anna, in the Czech Republic

Rachel, Katherine, Jacqueline, Louisa, Eamon in Australia

Rosalind Inslicht Edelstein